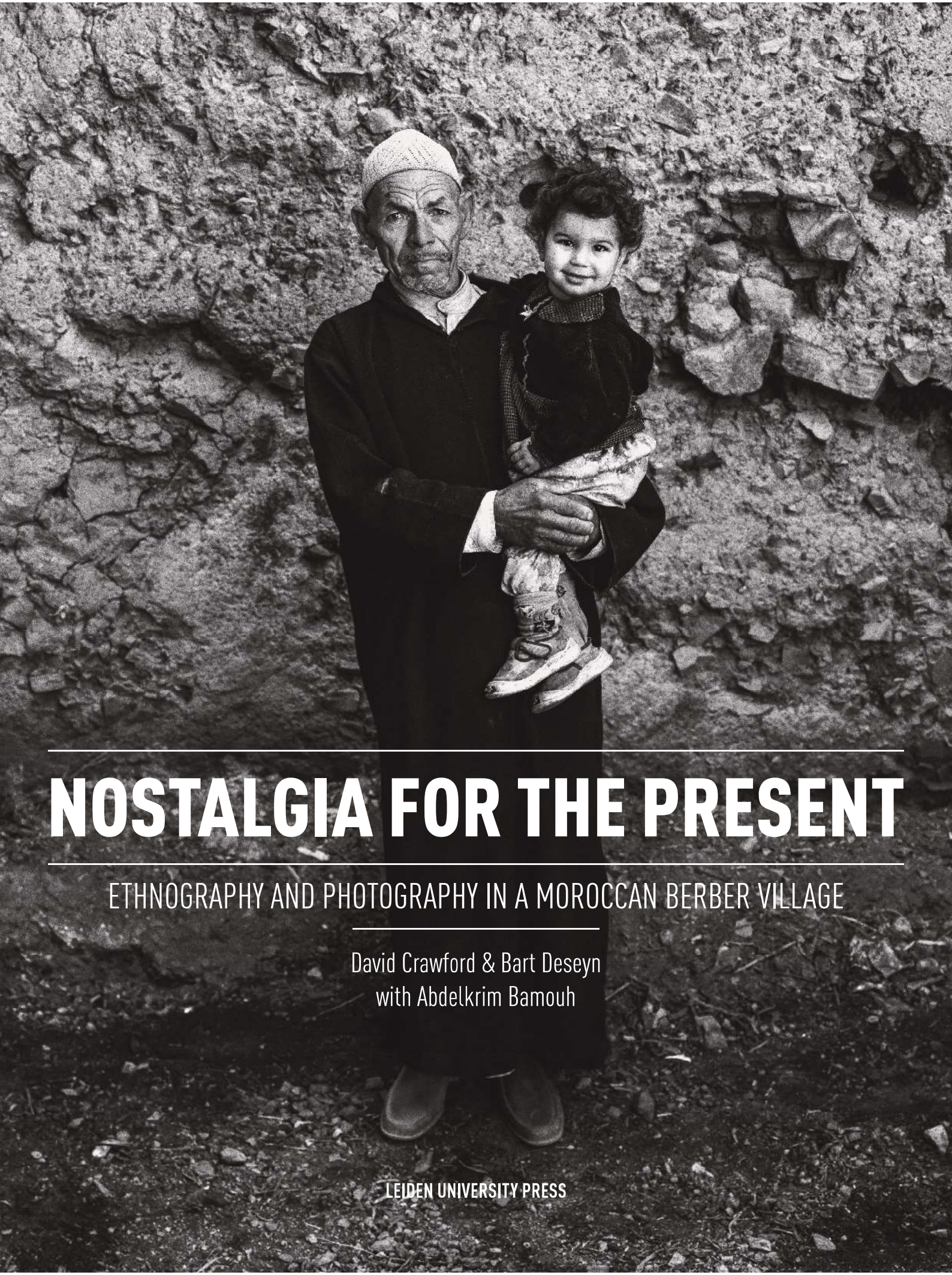

NOSTALGIA FOR THE PRESENT

ETHNOGRAPHY AND PHOTOGRAPHY IN A MOROCCAN BERBER VILLAGE

David Crawford & Bart Deseyn
with Abdelkrim Bamouh

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1 Fatima Ait Ben Ouchen, autumn 2008

PROLOGUE: FATIMA AT HOME

There are over 100 Ait Ben Ouchen family members in Tagharghist—half of the total village population—and every household has at least one "Fatima." The Fatima Ait Ben Ouchen pictured here is from the Ait Hussein subsection of the Ouchen, one of the poorer branches of that great family. She is standing in front of her father's house—he is Mohammed, son of Omar, son of Hussein, son of Mohammed Ait Yous. "Ait" simply means "people of." The name "Yous" is a Berber version of "Joseph." "Ouchen" means "jackal." So, five generations ago a certain Mohammed began life as a humble member of the Joseph family and left this world more than 100 descendants: the People of the Jackal. Even the most enduring things do still change in time.

Fatima lives through the door to her right in the background, along with her father, mother, and some of her sisters—or, more correctly, she lives there sometimes. Like her sisters and father, Fatima takes turns working down in the city. Not only is her section of the Ouchen family poor, but her grandfather is still alive. This means that her father has yet to inherit land, and without land a man cannot form an independent household. Fatima's father and his daughters manage to have their own household only by working periodically in the city.

You can see this in Fatima's urban clothes, *de rigueur* in 2008: plain skirt, with only a single, artful ruffle, and an embroidered shirt. These were purchased new; they are not donated thrift store material from Europe or the United States sold by the kilogram at the weekly rural souk. I never saw such clothes in 1998, when I lived in Tagharghist. Back then, a girl like Fatima would present herself in a stiff tartan skirt over leggings, with multiple tattered tops worn one on top of the other. She would have accessorized with cheap jewelry—no matter how hard the day's work promised to be—jangling tin bangles and plastic beads, and she would have had a headscarf tied the country way, with the knot on the forehead rather than around the chin (compare Fadma in photo 25 or Aisha in 29, for instance, with Aisha and Naima in 24). Like everywhere else, fashions change up in the mountains, not least because girls like Fatima move back and forth from the village to the city, embodying new feminine ideals as they repatriate small amounts of cash.

When she is in the village, Fatima wears the necklace of keys that responsible women bear proudly. These show that she is trusted with her family's supplies, with the sugar, barley, spices, and coffee. There are few valuables in a village; they remain locked in hidden storerooms. Women who hold the keys to these storerooms are central to the smooth functioning of the household, to the whole village order. Men travel to souk to do all the shopping and purchasing, but women control the larder. There are deep complementarities to village life. Everyone has a role with responsibilities, and everyone's role changes over time.

Fatima still wears leggings under her skirt, a fashion which has long been typical of mountain women. That has not gone out of style. And somehow the bright blue plastic shoes ornamented with a single yellow flower have endured the vicissitudes of fashion. (I sometimes wonder if the people in the blue shoe factory in China have any idea what becomes of their handiwork, and I wonder if these blue shoes sell anywhere else in the world.) Like every mountain girl, Fatima is powerful despite her slight figure. You can see it in her hands. She has thin arms and wrists, frail looking shoulders, but her palms are broad, her fingers thick, and nested within her skirt are two legs strung with sinews like steel cables. Fatima can do more than walk up and down a mountain bearing loads larger than she is. She can *run* with them, racing with her cousins and girlfriends, trilling songs at the same time. Sometimes these songs have delightfully mischievous lyrics. The trails outside the village are where girls temporarily escape the weight of village propriety, the formal social mores of their elders.

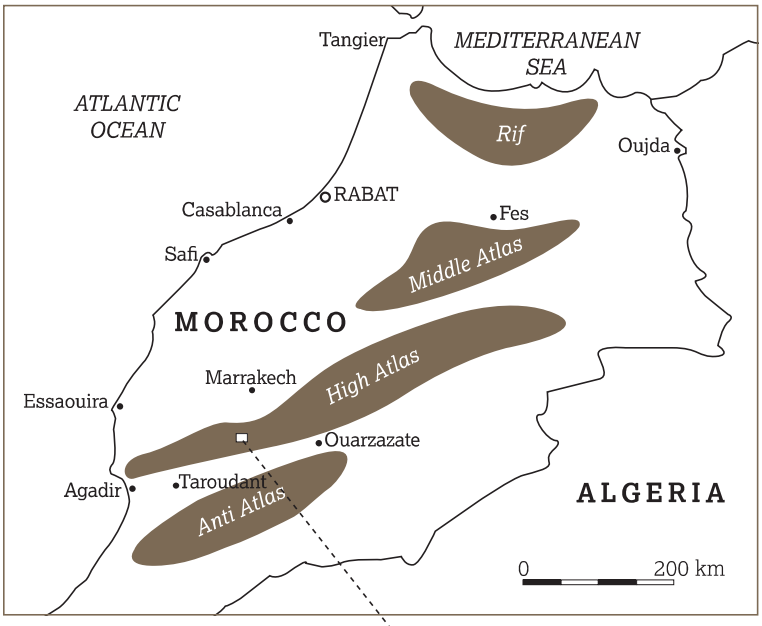
The little alley where Fatima stands is in the upper part of the village, off the main tunnel leading out of the *assarag*, or village square (7), and up to the fields above the village (34). It is not a part of the Tagharghist I know very well. Villages are surprisingly complicated places. I lived below this neighborhood, next to the road, among the most powerful members of the Ait Ali faction of the Ben Ouchen. Up here with Fatima are the cousins to the Ait Ali, and sometime opponents, the Ait Hussein and Ait l'Haj lineages. This section is also the home of the poorer members of the separate Idzdo lineage. These Idzdo are cramped together in the building to Fatima's left, behind her, beyond the little rock wall that encloses a cattle pen sometimes used as a toilet.

It is a long and complicated story why some households have land and some do not, why some are politically powerful despite the egalitarian ideals of the village. I wrote a whole book about these dynamics, but there is not a particularly wide audience for the esoterica of a village economy (Crawford 2008). The simplest explanation is that powerful families with many children eventually must divide their property among the heirs—the Quran specifies just how—and over time plots get smaller and smaller and names that have been "big," or *imqor*, begin to slip into penury. Small, weak families can slowly climb into respectability if they work hard and marry well, especially, these days, if one or more members secure a lucrative job in the city. You would never hear anyone brag about their wealth, not within earshot of their fellows. The stories of families rising and falling are known by everyone, whispered in the alleyways and behind closed doors, but rarely stated in public. That would be shameful. People take great care to disguise their financial situations, whether poor or more comfortable, but everyone knows that behind the imperturbable mud walls of the houses fates are written quite differently.

If the slow migration of land into and out of families has always led fortunes to change, migration for wage labor has accelerated the process, rocketing some families up the social ladder (if a member lands a good job) and dropping others into misfortune (as sons and daughters abandon the village for the cities and stop supporting their rural kin). Girls like Fatima labor in the city, gaining knowledge and skills, learning Arabic along with tough lessons about life amongst urban strangers. The depredations girls suffer, the abuse, and the sadness of being forced out of their natal village, all of this is transformed into assets for their families, or for some of them at least. These days the tables can turn quickly.

In 2004, I had tea with Fatima's father Mohammed in the little room behind her. He proudly showed me his new television and the video-disc player attached to it. He told me of the particular brand of solar power panel that ran the machines, the wattage or voltage or something I could not quite grasp. Then he put in a disk, a film of his older daughter's wedding. She had worked in the city and met a husband there. For the event, Mohammed had rented a tent and set it right in the path of the upper part of the village. (Where else would you put a tent? There are no flat spots in these mountains.) He had hired dancers, professional singers, and served a great feast to all willing to come. He had even contracted a video recording crew to make the film we were watching. Mohammed's poverty—and his long-lived father holding on to the family land—had forced the young man to the city in a bid for independence, and the city had facilitated it, had allowed him to transform his world. The pain of separation, of leaving his wife and family, of sending his girls to work in the houses of strangers: this had not been in vain, not finally. It took time, and sacrifice, but now Mohammed struggled to contain his pride as he displayed the fruits of his children's hard work to his more highhanded relatives back home, especially the ones who had not very subtly questioned his manliness for allowing his daughters to work for cash. Mohammed had the hovering images on the television to savor: moving pictures of the guests, the more powerful members of his extended family, and especially the old men, cramped together and bedazzled, drinking *his* tea in *his* tent, in an awe-inspiring, city-style festival imported into the very heart of the village.

And little Fatima had been key to it. Her wages, her years of grueling labor, secured this spectacular marriage for her older sister. Who knows whether Fatima's sacrifice will be further rewarded, in this world or the next? Who knows whether Fatima herself will marry, will come to have a spectacular wedding and a life caring for her own children instead of those she is hired to nurture? Her face seems haunted by such questions. A thousand generations of mountain girls have known with some certainty how they would spend their days, where they would work, what they would do: they would marry young and come to know the people among whom they would die. For this generation the future has been suddenly wrenched wide open. A terrifying chasm of possibilities stretches wide before Fatima. Characteristically stoic, with her family's needs pressing, she walks steadily into uncertain times.


Tangier
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
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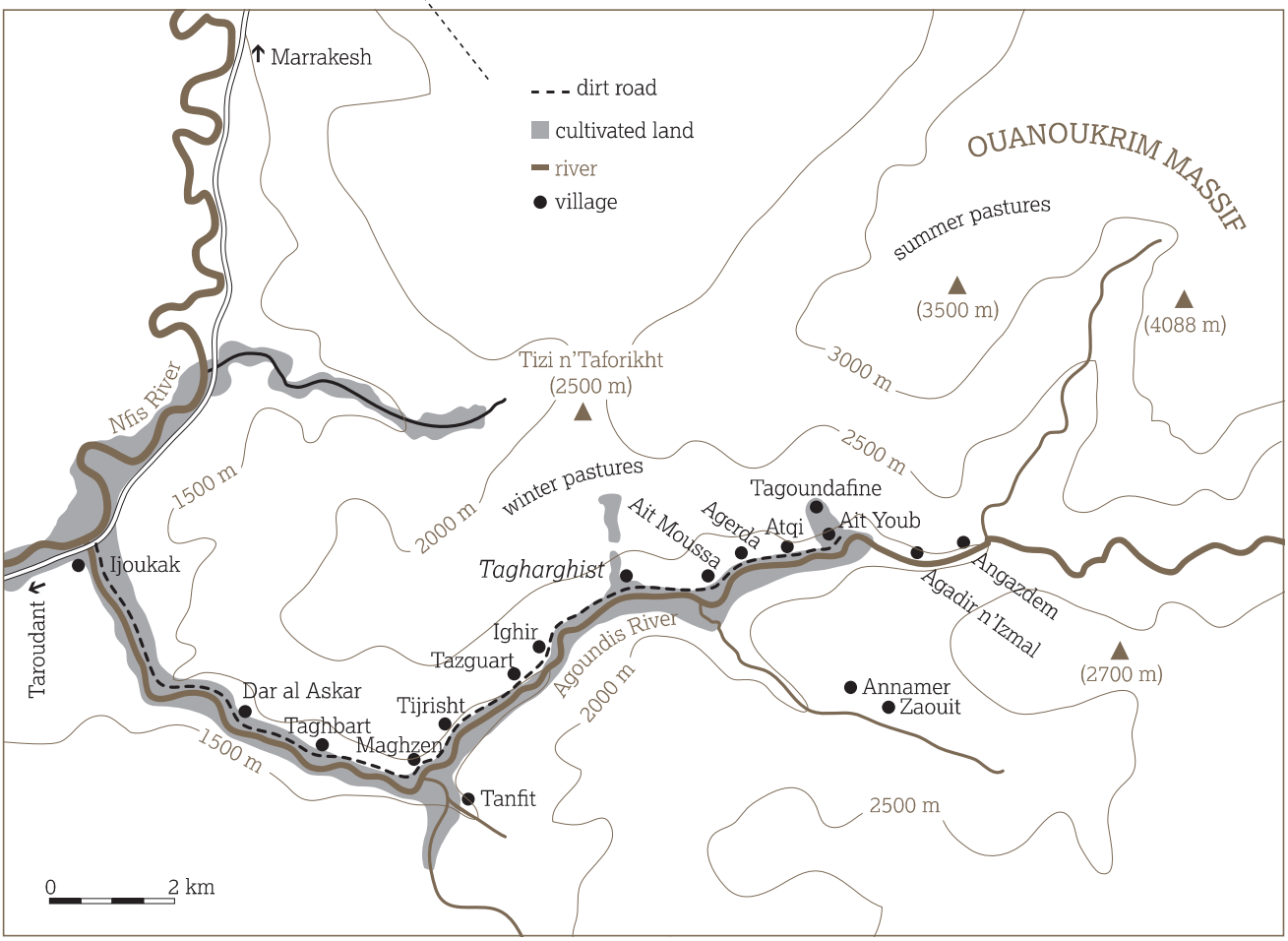
Marrakesh
dirt road
cultivated land
river
village
OUANOUKRIM MASSIF
summer pastures
(3500 m)
(4088 m)
3000 m
Tizi n'Taforikht
(2500 m)
2500 m
Nfis River
1500 m
winter pastures
2000 m
Tagoundafine
Ait Moussa
Agerda
Atqi
Ait Youb
Ijoukak
Tagharghist
Angazdem
Agadir n'Izmal
Taroudant
Ighir
Agoundis River
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(2700 m)
Dar al Askar
Tijrisht
Annamer
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2000 m
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INTRODUCTIONS

I. THE VILLAGE

Tagharghist is a village in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco, a humble cluster of mud and stone houses hand-built over centuries, and currently home to about 200 souls. Like most villages wedged into the creases of the mountains, Tagharghist has long been relatively isolated. Ultimate political control descends from beyond the valley, and there has been consistent emigration for work and study, but relatively few resources from the outside have seeped back in. The villagers built their own dirt road in 1995 to try to change this. It is a total of 17 kilometers along this road from Tagharghist to the junction with the paved tarmac at Ijoukak, and from there another 90 winding kilometers down to Marrakech. With the arrival of the road, trucks were able to access the upper reaches of the valley. This has encouraged villagers to grow market crops, especially fruit. The road also makes it easier to reach the medical center at the base of the valley, since you no longer need to ride a mule. The villagers capped a spring to bring drinking water to the village in 1999, and that same year a government school began its first kindergarten classes. Cement canals, solar power, and solar hot water in the mosque followed. Electric lines arrived in 2010, and now health teams periodically come through to do immunizations, though no patient records are kept, and despite some improvement the village remains largely illiterate.

Today the people of Tagharghist still produce most of their own food, principally barley, which they plant in an intricately irrigated system of over 1,400 terraces. They also grow maize and other animal fodder, some vegetables, and they harvest walnuts, almonds, and olives in good years. Young men graze small herds of sheep and goats in the surrounding mountains, and many people augment the subsistence economy by selling labor, especially that of their children, to less-poor Moroccans who live in the city. The new road and the installation of cell phone towers make it easier to track migrants and ensure their wages return to the village. With the money remitted by emigrants, village households can upgrade their meager purchases of plastic shoes and second-hand clothes to luxuries like dentures, spectacles, and gas stoves. Some have even purchased

satellite dishes, video-disc players, and battered televisions. These are becoming more popular now that power lines and meters have been installed.

Despite these transformations, Tagharghist remains a quiet place. Small trucks rumble through a few times a day, and occasionally someone will fire up the diesel-powered grain mill to turn a huge sack of grain into bags of flour. The putt-putt of the machine echoes through the valley, a raucous substitute for the defunct water mill down in the river. Five times a day the call to prayer lofts from the roof of the mosque, drowning the sputter of a radio or girls ululating as they haul wood or fodder. The younger children squeal as they careen along the village paths, chickens scatter, goats gargle officiously as shepherds cajole them to their evening paddocks. Cows low mournful and impatient in their dark cells beneath the houses. The irrepressible wind wraps itself around everything, whistling through the pane-less windows of the village and across the denuded slopes. Beneath everything is the throb of the river as it winds past the boulders in the depths of the canyon.

I lived in Tagharghist for much of 1998 and 1999 and I have returned almost every year since then. I have watched buildings go up and some fall down, children grow up and marry and have children of their own, and old people (and some young people) die. I have come to care about the place. I am an anthropologist, and part of my job involves explaining what goes on in this village. However, this book is not exactly about that, about my professional responsibility to track and publish what is happening. This book aims to reveal this place in a different way, through the eyes of another—or the lens, really—of the photographer Bart Deseyn.

II. THE PROJECT

I met Bart in 2007 in Marrakech. He had emailed me with evidence that he knew my writing, and something about anthropology, and he showed me his previous work on Berber communities. His photographs immediately impressed me, but I have never liked photographers very much—or at least the *act* of photography. Few anthropologists do. There is something intrusive about a camera stuck in people's faces, the aiming of a thing that looks like a gun at people who cannot escape (Mueggler 2011:57, 174). Photographic subjects look vaguely traumatized, caught—at least if you let them know you are making a photo of them, which many photographers seem to try to avoid. Moreover, most photography books on Berber communities render the people as exotic, from a mythical time, with bright costumes (or veils) on the women, luridly colored carpets, and every hint of modern life carefully cropped from the scenes. I can understand why such books sell. They are alluring. The "indigenous" feels more authentic without the rusting sardine cans and degrading soapboxes, plastic prayer mats and cement canals that are ubiquitous in villages like Tagharghist.

Bart, however, did not excise the small testaments to contemporary existence. His work captures the ethereal beauty of the people and place, but without purifying the photos of the reality I know. When I saw his first book (Deseyn 2006), I loved the framing of the people, the palpable quietude of the rooms and landscapes, but also the way the details of everyday life could be found lurking in the shadows. A basket here, a broken pot there, an awkwardly placed light switch. The pictures seemed to retain their original language, by which I mean that you had to know something of the village to comprehend what was going on in the photo. The images were not self-contained, they did not, or at least did not always, speak for themselves, and I liked this enigmatic quality. I could see things in the frames that spoke to me, that felt intimate and authentic and personal. My time in Berber villages

made Bart's photos legible to me in the way that personal snapshots are, a way that is different from how I see an Ansel Adams landscape or a southerner captured by Robert Frank. I appreciate the work of Adams and Frank, but it communicates in a more generic language of images rather than a dialect grounded in the place the photos were taken. Bart's photos speak in Berber.

Bart and I agreed to go up to Tagharghist together along with his friend and translator Abdelkrim Bamouh. In the village, Bart and Abdelkrim quickly made friends with my friends, and the idea of this book was born. It is grounded in Bart's photos, but to call them "his" is not right. Most of these were carefully constructed with the help of the villagers pictured in them, and with Abdelkrim (and occasionally his brother Mustapha). Sometimes I helped, too. Abdelkrim's deep understanding of rural Morocco and fluent *Tachelhit* (Berber) facilitated a dialogue that in many of the portraits emerges through a fusion of formality and intimacy. The pictures illuminate many subtle things that I have struggled to convey in my written work, a combination of beauty and brutality inherent to rural life in this part of the world. They also give a sense of what villagers want to show about their world, or at least what they decided to show in conversation with a few odd outsiders interested in building pictures together.

I agreed to work with Bart and Abdelkrim because I liked them and I respected their method, one developed through extensive work in other Amazigh communities (Deseyn 2006). In general, Bart uses a 4 x 5 inch field camera, a large, heavy device that has to be mounted on a tripod and manipulated from beneath a black cloth. The photographer has little leeway; he is relatively immobile and is always visible to the subjects. Improvisation is difficult, and the process is profoundly public. Exposure with this type of camera is limited to a single shot, unlike the fast repetitive takes allowed by hand-held cameras. The ritualized operation of Bart's equipment transforms the process of picture-taking into a necessarily collaborative picture-making. There is constant dialogue between the subjects of the photos, Abdelkrim, and Bart while the shot is in creation.

What I found was that Bart and Abdelkrim make photographs the way I do ethnography. They did not roam around and "take pictures" in the sense of capturing them. This is not photography as theft. Instead, the photographers worked slowly, deliberatively, through active conversation. You see this especially in the portraits. The subjects are calm and still. The gaze does not feel intrusive. People are presented at eye level—on the same plane as the photographer, neither below nor above, neither too near nor too far away. The distance evident in the photos is the approximate distance Bart stood from the people; the lens is not used to claim a false sense of intimacy, to get closer than a subject would like in real life. Villagers present themselves with some of their defining context—a wall, a door, a field, the world they live through and work in. This is a world they have actively constructed; it is part of who they are. We did not pay anybody for his or her image or otherwise cajole (though one man offered to pay us). All of the photos are voluntary. We did contribute money to the village as a whole on several occasions, but there was no obligation or pressure for anyone to agree to be photographed. The people who are in these pictures are in them because they wanted to be, because Abdelkrim helped them to grasp the larger project of documenting rural Berber lives—a project many felt proud to join. Those who wanted to be named are named, and others are represented by pseudonyms. Villagers uninterested in being part of the book remain absent from it. Those who are pictured received copies of their photos.

Mostly the subjects chose the poses themselves. If there is a feeling of propriety or formality in the photos, it is because being professionally photographed is a rare event for a villager, one to be taken seriously. The somber tone in most of the portraits does not reveal the inner state of individuals, or a cultural trait generally shared. What the facial expressions and body language do show is the consciousness of villagers in the self-objectifying process of crafting photos. Each person practices a form of "participant objectification," to modify one of Pierre Bourdieu's concepts slightly (1990:68): we see villagers watching Bart

intently as he moves around his big, slow camera fiddling with things to complete a shot. We can sense that they are trying to fathom what Bart is doing, and what they should be doing in the long string of moments before the "click" that will finalize the composition. Most of the portraits exude studiousness, a focused curiosity born of the familiar struggle over the presentation of self that cameras universally inspire (Barthes 2010[1980]:10).

III. THE PEOPLE

The people of Tagharghist think of themselves as *Ishelhin* (pronounced ish-al-heen), by which they mean the speakers of the southern Moroccan Berber variety called *Tachelhit* (tash-al-heet). Berbers are the indigenous people of North Africa, the people who met with Phoenician traders in antiquity, who fought Greek and Roman armies in the classical era and Visigoth invasions after that. Berbers were adopted into the Islamic world via the arrival of Arabs in the 8th century, and became part of the vital thrust of Islamic civilization into Spain. Since then Arabs and Berbers have coexisted and intermingled with their Jewish neighbors in North Africa, generally peacefully, though not always. There were many Jewish Berber villages, especially in the High Atlas, and many Berber speakers moved to the city, came to speak Arabic, and eventually became "Arabs" for all practical purposes.

Recently activists have emphasized Berber distinction from Arabs, and they have promoted the term "Amazigh" to refer to the people, culture and language native to North Africa (Chaker 1984, 1989; Maddy-Weitzman 2011; Silverstein 2004b, 2007, 2010). For activists, "Amazigh" is preferable to "Berber" because the former term is indigenous (it is usually translated as "free person") while "Berber" comes from the same Greek root as "barbarian." A rich literature has grown up in recent years as Amazigh people explore their history and culture in Morocco and work to reconceptualize their relations with their cousins in Algeria, the Canary Islands, Libya, Mali, Tunisia, Europe, and elsewhere. However, the villagers of Tagharghist are not overly concerned with such debates. If you press them, farmers will tell you they are *Ishelhin*, but this identity is mostly relevant to dealings with outsiders, Arabic speakers like schoolteachers or government officials, or Amazigh people from other parts of the country. In English, the term "Berber" harbors no negative connotations (Boukous 1995, Sadiqi 1997), and in this book "Berber" will be used interchangeably with "Amazigh." *Ishelhin* is more specifically the term the villagers of Tagharghist use for themselves, and refers to Amazigh people in the Moroccan south.

Ishelhin are stereotypically understood as traders and shopkeepers more than agriculturalists. Hardworking, thrifty, humorous, and often devout, they dominate the dry goods business in Morocco. Because of their location in the barren south of the country, they also have a reputation for migration, and you find *Ishelhin* working in construction sites and restaurants, studying in mosques and working in factories all over Morocco and in many foreign countries. In this sense, the villagers of Tagharghist are somewhat unusual: the snowmelt in the Agoundis River is reliable enough for them to farm successfully. There is migration from Tagharghist, but it has been less socially significant than in drier, lower altitudes (where in some villages nearly all the men are absent: see Hoffman 2008). Tagharghist today remains an agricultural community: a viable, vital Amazigh village.

Despite the fact that it is becoming rare to find *Ishelhin* surviving predominantly by agriculture, the rural ideal is powerful. Many Amazigh people, and *Ishelhin* in particular, idolize "the village" as a place of purity and peace, cultural authenticity and moral rectitude. Popular Berber-language videos routinely feature villages as sites where the hero (generally a migrant, often a pop singer) finds the personal strength to survive the evils of city life. It is not only villages that serve this cultural

purpose; the entire landscape of homeland, the *tamazirt*, is a powerful cultural ideal (Hoffman 2002). The terrain of southern Morocco is easily identifiable in *Tachelhit*-language movies, and it is deeply meaningful to the people who watch them. The rural homeland is a constituting place, a defining place, and this can be potent even for urbanites who do not live in the countryside—and perhaps never did. One's *tamazirt* travels with a person, infusing and defining him or her. When a stranger asks "*menza tamazirtnik*?" (which means, "where is your *tamazirt*" or "where are you from?") the answer is a geographical place. It can be where you are born, but often it is where your family is from, your ancestors. In southern Morocco, such a place name reveals much of what you need to know about a person. Asking where someone is from is asking who he or she *is*. To live away from one's homeland is to live alienated from a part of oneself. In this sense, even the landscapes presented in this book are a form of portraiture.

The beauty of Tagharghist and its people should not cause us to romanticize village life. I find such villages very difficult places to live in, and this is not always evident in the photographs. (Which reminds us that just because photos capture things prose cannot does not mean they reveal everything.) There are flies and mosquitoes in the summer, heat and dust, bedbugs, lice, and scorpions, and windstorms that fill every pore with dust so fine that it comes to circulate in your blood; in the winter there is snow, rain, mud; roofs leak, walls drip, firewood sputters and smokes, resisting the flames. The damp sucks the heat from your bones. There is always illness: stomach sickness, dehydration, headaches, rotting teeth, infected eyes, broken bones, mothers dead during childbirth, stillbirths, cancer, ulcers, goiter, malnutrition. When I am in Tagharghist, I inevitably suffer gut-wrenching distress, but worse than this is the visceral pain of communing with good people in deep poverty. I feel useless. I am useless. The generosity of people who share the very little they have, the harrowing conditions in which they laugh and love and plan and hope—it is hard to take. I give so little back. Just a little money. Some clothes. Some medicine. The great structural inequality that separates Tagharghist from my world is not soluble in my good wishes. Neither the difficulties nor the beauty evaporates when I am not there. I miss Tagharghist when I am away, but I do not know exactly what I miss, or why. This book emerges from a longing, a kind of nostalgia I feel but cannot properly explain.

IV. THE WEIGHT OF THE PAST

Photography has a long and vexed history in Morocco, one intimately bound to ethnography, European colonialism, tourism, and what scholars call "Orientalist" visions of an exotic other. To start with colonialism: France blockaded and then invaded neighboring Algeria beginning in 1830, and Spain occupied the northern Moroccan city of Tetouan in 1860. The Alaouite family—the longstanding rulers of Morocco—opposed the Christians, and fought to maintain national independence from Europe (and from the Ottoman Turks before them), but by the end of the 19th century the writing was, so to speak, on the wall. Germany, Spain, France and England jockeyed for domination (of Morocco and much of the rest of Africa) and a weakened Moroccan state could do little to control its destiny. In 1912, the Treaty of Fes divided Morocco into French and Spanish zones of influence; the Alaouite dynasty was allowed to reign nominally, but not to effectively rule. The bulk of Morocco remained a French protectorate from 1912 to independence in 1956.

Moroccans did not passively accept French domination, and resistance took different forms in different times and places. Berbers were sometimes among the most intractable of France's foes, as when the Ait 'Atta tribal confederation continued to battle the French army into the 1930s, or when Abdelkrim al Khattabi, the leader of the Aith Waryaghar Berbers, formed an

independent republic in the northern Rif Mountains in 1921. (It took the combined forces of the French and Spanish to end his Republic in 1925.) However, in some cases Berbers provided the colonizers with willing partners. Pasha al Glaoui, for instance, was perhaps the most powerful native leader under the French, and Tayeb al Goundafi, who controlled the mountains pictured in this book, was eventually awarded a French Legion of Honor medal for his campaign against the Ait Baamaran allies of Spain in the Moroccan south. (The Ait Baamaran were also Berbers.) Some Berbers fought as proxies of European powers, in both World Wars and in wars of colonial oppression, such as French Indochina. Back home, some were Europe's allies and some her fiercest opponents.

France's bloody experience in Algeria tempered the way it went about subduing its new protectorate. Marshal Lyautey, France's resident general from 1912 to 1925, sought to overlay French civilization on the Moroccan milieu rather than obliterate it; it was supposed to be a "civilizing mission," not a deracination. In this vein, Lyautey established "modern" French cities next to ancient Moroccan ones, such that Fes and Marrakech, for instance, each have a "traditional" medina surrounded by ancient walls and a separate *ville nouvelle* of concrete apartments and wide boulevards—always placed nearby but not quite adjacent to the old. The intention was to demarcate traditional and modern zones, and to this end Lyautey even banned Christians from entering mosques. The idea was to provide a potent example of civilized modernity, one that would lure Moroccans to French ways without destroying the native fabric of life.

Like colonial powers everywhere, France sought to understand what it hoped to govern, and trained ethnographers were dispatched to document the natives. There was a special emphasis on social and political organization, for obvious reasons, especially in the wild hinterlands of the country that urban-based elites had always struggled to control. Tribal names and divisions, alliances, boundaries, traditional enemies, even habits of dress and dining were carefully collected, collated, and systematized in reports. Efforts were made to build on indigenous modes of political control, perhaps most famously in the Berber *dahir* of 1930. The *dahir*, or edict, allowed rural Berbers to use "customary courts" for civil disputes and freed them from the Islamic law regnant over urban Arabs. France thought it was appeasing rural Berbers, but the distinction inherent in the *dahir* was perceived by many as an attempt to "divide and rule." It backfired, consolidating pan-Moroccan religious identity and inflaming nationalist passions for independence. However, France was equally willing to eschew appeasement and use local strongmen to govern intractable tribes, notably the "Lords of the Atlas," three powerful leaders who together ruthlessly dominated the High Atlas and much of the south of the country for the first half of the 20th century.

The ethnographic research produced in the Protectorate era was often excellent, especially work by Robert Montagne (1930, 1931) and Jacques Berque (1938, 1955). This was not purely academic anthropology focused on recondite debates, but careful, strategic inquiry with the explicit aim of governance (Roberts 2002). From today's vantage point, there are grave ethical issues in the way ethnographic engagement was undertaken in the service of a powerful, exogenous state; our only contemporary consolation is that we have the ethnographic record to study. By the end of the 20th century anthropologists were asking themselves hard questions about the purposes of their work, their relations with their interlocutors, and the debts they owed to the communities they studied (Crawford and Newcomb 2013).

Photographers were involved in the colonial experience, too. The *Service des Affaires Indigènes* encouraged the visual documentation of every corner of the country. Often this involved landscapes, rural markets, and picturesque scenes of the countryside, but photographers showed a pronounced interest in what were considered the racial characteristics of different factions of the population (Arabs, Berbers, and Jews, for instance) as well as the specific visual signature of different "tribes," with

an emphasis on women's clothes and ornamentation, especially tattoos. (What counts as a "tribe" is a complex question that the French never wholly settled: see Berque 1953.) Pictures of types and traits were collected and organized like botanical specimens.

This government-sanctioned photographic documentation fitted with an emerging consumer market for Moroccan images, one that played on the Orientalist stereotypes famously analyzed by Edward Said (1978). Said's argument, in short, is that European scholarship presented "the East" as a kind of stereotyped inversion of "the West." If the westerner was modern, rational, and free yet self-controlled, the oriental—including Moroccans—was traditional, fanatical, and oppressed yet libidinous. This framework has been especially pronounced in its treatment of women (Abu Lughod 2001). Opponents of Said have argued that the Orientalist thesis is overly simplistic (Eickelman 2002:27), but at least some of the photographic record of Morocco would seem to support Said's assertions.

The book *The Magic of Morocco* (Ben Jelloun, D'Hooghe and Sijelmassi 2000), for instance, provides many telling examples, including photographs from Marcelin Flandrin, René Bertrand, Jean Besancenot, and Laure Albin Guillot. The images are irrefutably beautiful, but they also collectively structure a vision of Morocco that Moroccans themselves long "rejected with indifference, or even indignation and contempt" (see the essay by Sijelmassi in *The Magic of Morocco*, pg. 23). Repeated images of shrouded women, for instance, are counterpoised with shots of women nude or in states of erotic abandon. Flandrin, in particular, seemed to specialize in depictions of Moroccan women naked (a Google search of "marcelin flandrin images" provides a spectacular, if non-scientific, sample). Said's critique of Orientalism is that such images were constructed for European consumption by European men playing on European appetites (Melis 2004); such constructions eventually led to a particular—and particularly skewed—understanding of Morocco.

Flandrin's work demonstrates the contradictory power of Orientalist photography. Posed in classic European style, photos of Moroccan women establish a familiarity between the two cultures (Moroccan women were subject to the male gaze in the same way as their European cousins) while at the same time marking off a certain cultural distance (through the carpets, traditional headdresses, and other props with which the models were posed). Such photos work anthropologically, we might say, in that they simultaneously assert a commonality (though not exactly a common humanity) as they emphasize cultural distinctiveness. Moreover, while Flandrin's photo postcards were sometimes labeled generically, such as "pretty Moroccan girl," other shots specifically identified the subjects as "slaves," a trope meant to support the *mission civilatrice*, or "civilizing mission," that France used to justify its occupation of the country in the first place. Photographs of nubile slave girls could titillate at the same time as they served to bolster the sense of moral superiority enjoyed by the Frenchmen staring at them.

"Traditional" scenes of "typical" ethnographic types functioned similarly: they established categories, a visual code for how Europe would see, and govern, Morocco. "Jews," "Arabs," "Berbers," and "slaves" were frequently included in captions coupled to photographs, and "Captions serve to steer viewers to an appropriate response: not merely how to look at a picture but what to feel when looking at a picture" (Slyomovics 2010:138, drawing on Sontag 1977). Evidently, we are meant to "feel" (more than rationally consider) that Morocco is inhabited by distinct "types" of people. Slowly and subconsciously, such terms and images fused into a framework for comprehension.

Unsurprisingly, then, contemporary anthropologists harbor some anxiety about all this, a discomfort with the politically retrograde origins of the discipline, and a suspicion of the ethics of photography. One consequence, perhaps, is that photographs are absent from, or relatively unimportant to, most contemporary ethnographic texts. Early ethnographic work

used far more photographs than we do today, despite the fact that the equipment then was much more difficult to manage. A quick perusal of classic anthropological texts, like Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* or Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, reveals how salient they thought photography was to their ethnographic mission (both had dozens of photos and other images). There are generally few pictures in today's published ethnographies, and they seem afterthoughts rather than material integral to the work. This is true of my own publications. There are only seven photos in *Moroccan Households in the World Economy* (Crawford 2008) despite the fact that I have many hundreds of wonderful images. I never petitioned the press to include more; I was ambivalent about those I did include. I know other anthropologists who are better photographers than I am who use even fewer pictures. Anthropologists are reluctant to include photography as part of our ethnographic work—even anthropologists native to the country (see for example Amahan 1998, Hammoudi 1993, Mahdi 1999, Rachik 1990, 1992).

Exceptions to this rule illustrate our ambivalence. For example, the celebrated *Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society* is one of my favorite books, a classic in its own time. As a graduate student with limited funds I spent nearly a hundred dollars in London on a used copy of the book—it was long out of print even then, and I know it has sold for as much as $600 more recently. It has been inspirational in a number of ways and sits on my desk as I write this.

Why am I embarrassed to admit that my favorite part is the photos? Taken by Paul Hyman, a professional photographer who came to Morocco to visit a childhood friend (the anthropologist Paul Rabinow), the images are inserted into the center of the book with little to explain them except a "list of illustrations." This includes minimalist epithets like "butcher, Sefrou medina" or "student of the Quran." The photographs are deliberately bereft of text and are self-consciously separate from the three long essays that make up the main substance of the book as a whole; the photos are labeled by C. Geertz as "perceptions, not illustrations" (1979:6) to emphasize their independence from the text. Hyman is often excluded in bibliographic references to the book. On the title page the three authors are listed alphabetically; then it reads "With a photographic essay by Paul Hyman," which is numbered separately from the rest of the book, of which it is clearly not a part.

What does all this say about the relationship between anthropology and photography, at least in Morocco? Susan Slyomovics writes insightfully about these photos in her edited volume (see Slyomovics 2010), and Paul Hyman too provides a kind of historical context to the making of the pictures in the same place (Hyman 2010). We know that Clifford Geertz successfully lobbied the press to include the photos, but also that he wanted photos and text definitively separated. The substantive text of the book does not comment on, or respond to, the photos. It is as if there are two books packaged in one cover.

A second, more recent example from neighboring Algeria helps to underline the point. *Picturing Algeria* features photos taken by the eminent sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu during his early research in North Africa. The book is particularly concerned with everyday life amidst the social dislocation of colonial domination, which was Bourdieu's main research focus at the time. In an opening interview in the book Bourdieu has a number of intriguing things to say about anthropology and photography, including the way both rely on "objectifying and loving, [a] detached and yet intimate relationship" (2012[2003]:17). This hugely influential intellectual, the author of more than two dozen books, including some on the topic of photography itself (1965), says that "it is perfectly natural to link the context of my research and my photos" (2012[2003]: 24). But in fact he never did. He died before he had a chance.

The text in *Picturing Algeria* was drawn from the aforementioned interview and grafted to selections from a number of different works Bourdieu produced over more than forty years. The writing is not about the photos explicitly, nor were the photos made in

response to the text. Why did the author not engage his photos earlier in his career? Bourdieu suggests in the interview included in the English edition that he "self censored" some of his "literary impulses," especially in his early work, and he discusses the constraints of academic propriety. It is breathtaking to read so influential a scholar admit to feeling constrained in this way. In another context, Deborah Kapchan writes "No doubt Bourdieu was… torn by his affective attachments to the place [Algeria] and his inability to endorse those attachments" (2013:186). Kapchan is surely right, but why was Bourdieu unable to "endorse" his "attachments" via photography? Why, indeed, do books ostensibly about "visual anthropology" use so few pictures, or present pictures without reference to text, or feature text that does not refer to the photos included in the book (Potsma and Crawford 2006, Bourdieu 1965)?

One possibility is that the "affective intentionality" of photographs (Barthes 2010[1980]: 21) makes them alien, or even dangerous, to intellectuals more comfortable with disembodied ideas. Barthes writes suggestively that photographs yield "those 'details' which constitute the very raw material of ethnological knowledge" (Barthes 2010[1980:28) and I believe this rawness undermines our disciplinary purpose, the metaphorical cooking of ethnographic material into something intellectually digestible. To simply *look* feels touristic, sophomoric, voyeuristic rather than anthropological. Or perhaps we anthropologists fear that the texts we so laboriously produce may devolve into a "mere" caption, since a great photo ensures there is "no caption needed" (Hariman and Lucaites 2007). Perhaps the sensuousness of photos calls us to acknowledge our sensuous selves—to "endorse our attachments," in Kapchan's words. Or possibly, as Becker argues, the problem lies in the relationship between anthropology and science (2007:191), with photographs divulging our shameful humanistic inclinations. For whatever reason, Bourdieu only managed to publish his extraordinary photographs of colonial Algeria at the very end of his storied career, and by then he had run out of time to craft a text to fit them. To me the photos of Bourdieu and Hyman are viscerally powerful; they help me feel the world behind the anthropological analysis. I wish there were words to further illuminate them.

Beyond this, what I find most striking is the role that taking photos played methodologically in the two works. Hyman is candid about using his camera to successfully open conversations—despite the fact that he spoke almost no Arabic and was told he could never photograph Moroccans because of their religious beliefs (Hyman 2010:112). Bourdieu, by contrast, was working out the practice of fieldwork, and for him the photos were experimental tools of social inquiry. He was often stealthy in his attempts to "take pictures," but his meditation on this produced insights into the "objectivizing" nature of research and writing, an insight derived from photography. Neither case seems crudely Orientalist, much less colonialist. I believe that we have nothing to fear from photos, and yet both works remain opportunities at best partly realized. These books present photography attempting a dialogue with North Africans, but the lack of integration between photos and text limits their symbiotic power. Ethnographic and photographic work in other contexts confirms the collaborative potential of text and image, as when João Biehl worked with Torben Eskerod to produce *Vita*, Philippe Bourgois and Jeffery Schonberg created *Righteous Dopefiend* or Filip De Boeck and Marie-Françoise Plissart produced *Kinshasa: Tales of the Invisible City*. These works often focus on the abject, and show the power of photography to humanize the rejected. It is a topic for another essay why misery seems to make for more anthropological photography than mundane, everyday beauty.

There are precedents for a dialogical photographic approach in the North African context. More than thirty years ago, in *Moroccan Dialogues*, Kevin Dwyer sought to ground ethnographic inquiry in reciprocal exchange more than one-sided observation and interpretation (1982). Dwyer framed his ethnography explicitly as a conversation, one focused on the tension between "events" and a set of "dialogues" about them. While he certainly retained authorial control, he included reams of what Malinowski might call the "imponderabilia of everyday life," the sort of details that can lurk in the corners of well built photos. Vincent Crapanzano, too, pursued a dialogical approach (1980), as did Dale Eickelman somewhat less explicitly (1985). More

recently, Silverstein has stated flatly, "anthropology is ultimately a dialogical encounter" (2013:117), and clearly photography can be part of the dialogue (Biehl 2005:19, 25).

In their previous work—and in this book—Bart Deseyn and Abdelkrim Bamouh bring such collaboration to rural Morocco. They pursue photography as a patient and respectful conversation, inclusive of the people being photographed. This may be an elaboration of Hyman's approach, but Hyman was "innocent of academic social science" (Geertz, Geertz and Rosen 1979:1, Hyman 2010:111) while Deseyn and Bamouh understand Berbers *and* the anthropologists who study them. *Nostalgia for the Present* does not include "photographs by…" as an afterthought to the text, and does not erase the photographers as makers of the book; the pictures are central, and the text built around them, in response to them. Through careful conversation with Amazigh people, Deseyn and Bamouh demonstrate that what makes a photo "ethnographic" is the *way it is made* and the context in which it is used, not the nature of the subject in the picture (Becker 2007:191). *Nostalgia for the Present* aims for something like a dialogical visual ethnography.

V. SNAPSHOTS

Morocco is a photogenic country. Whatever reservations anthropologists have about taking pictures or displaying them, tourists have long been avid consumers of Moroccan images. The ancient walls of the *medinas* in Fes and Marrakech, Roman ruins at Volubilis, seascapes and deserts, mountains and palm oases have formed a staple of tourist photography. During my trips I always find striking postcards to send home: shots of twisting alleyways in Fes or spice sellers in Marrakech, the massive walls of Rabat or Essaouira, pastoral scenes of goats grazing in trees or men praying before a stark landscape of snow and bright sprouted barley. By contrast, when I am in the U.S. I find it difficult to locate postcards to send to Morocco. I could mail a shot of the Empire State Building or the Grand Canyon—the U.S. certainly has its iconic features—but I do not live in New York or Colorado. I live in suburban Connecticut. There are no commercial images of the suburbs I call home, for what would seem obvious aesthetic reasons. This is true for Moroccans who live in middle-class suburbs of their country, too; there are few tourist photos of the concrete apartments of Casablanca or Rabat (Ossman 1994). However, my particular Moroccan interlocutors—rural farmers—*do* inhabit places framed in postcards; my friends live and work in one part of the bucolic imaginary that foreigners love to romanticize, to *look at*. And the look of this place seems to come from another time.

Time has long been a problem for anthropologists. As a discipline, we necessarily trade in cultural distance. We go to *other* places, at least we used to, but these other places serve to index other times. We implicitly convert space to time. We suffer from what Michael Hertzfeld calls "structural nostalgia," a "representation of an Edenic order—a time before time—in which the balanced perfection of social relations has not yet suffered the decay that affects everything human" (1990:305, also Silverstein 2004a). We stand accused of a "denial of coevalness" or *allochronism* (Fabian 1983:31-32), the inability to countenance the contemporaneousness of the people we represent.

If this is an ever-present danger to ethnographic writing, photos are worse. Photos freeze time, and black-and-white images have a particularly profound tendency to muddy our temporal senses and retroject our subjects back in time. This doubles the problem for a book like this. Photos of rural Morocco fit a particular framework already embedded in the eye of the (Western) beholder. Donkeys, mud walls, agricultural labor: the pictorial elements seem to say something in themselves before the

creator of the text can say anything at all. We risk presenting a contemporary place as if it is from another time, from "biblical times," to quote guidebooks and postcards of Morocco. There is a way that rural Morocco evokes an idealized past of rustic harmony, a warm imaginary time before our *Gemeinschaft* (community) had given way to anonymous *Gesellschaft* (society). There is no avoiding the legacy of ethnography and photography. But can we pit the two against one another, use the tension between them, without romanticizing the place we are trying to show or even more firmly establishing it as a place out of time?

Rural Moroccans themselves have no such problems with these images. The stone walls, high pastures, and humble shepherds' huts so vibrant in tourist photography did not interest my Moroccan friends, at least not in a photogenic sense. Such things are from the "now" they inhabit, from a quotidian reality where the elements have proper names. Villagers did not see mythical time or an idealized past when they looked at these photos; they searched instead for something that told them *exactly* when Bart took the photo—a particular season, for instance, a good or bad harvest year, or the month a certain migrant was back from the city. For villagers these photos are highly particular, in other words, references to some specific *tamazirt*, a telling place in a specific moment. Absent a relationship to people grounded in space and time, the photos held no meaning. Intriguingly, this seems true of video too. Once the technology became available, one of the first forms of electronic entertainment my village friends sought was video-discs of other communities' wedding ceremonies. These they would scrutinize for the songs, lyrics, dancing, the clothes, and what they told you about the particular people living in other places at the specific moment consolidated into the event. This interest was anthropological, except that the Others were understood as contemporaries. If photos "quote from appearances," in John Berger's words (1982:111), and such "appearances in themselves are oracular" (1982:118), villagers patiently attempted to explain their oracular photos and videos in the specific language of the place, not in a general discourse of images.

Photographs were part of my own personal engagement with the country also. When I first moved to Tagharghist in 1998, one of my techniques to engage people involved my camera. I had a 35 mm Pentax K-1000 that my mother had given me for my sixteenth birthday. Almost two decades later, I still carried it with me; and when I first arrived in the village, one sure way to enter into discussions with people was to leave the camera visible. Sometimes folks, especially women, would point to it and indicate that they did not want to be photographed. Okay, I would say, and slide it inside my bag. It was a chance to show that I respected their wishes, played by their rules. At other times people would specifically ask to be photographed, or ask me to photograph someone, usually a visiting relative from the city, a baby, or small child. Mothers were particularly keen to have me take photos of their babies, and a disproportionate number of my personal photographic corpus of the village involve women with their children.

Once I took a photo, I would make sure to develop it the next time I visited the relative metropolis of Taroudant and bring copies back to the village. These small tokens of my affection became objects of discussion. I would ask who was in the photo and we would talk about them over tea. Such talk became foundational to building my language skills and to learning about the relations between families in the village. Over time, I started to see my photos pinned to the mud walls of nearly every house I visited. (There are still a few up, as I notice in photo 15 above the window.) Later, as digital cameras became inexpensive, I took many more photos, often of people posing before walls spangled with earlier shots of the family. Eventually we were taking pictures of pictures.

This was a huge change in what we might call "visual literacy" from when I first arrived in Tagharghist. In 1998, I remember sitting on the floor with Omar Lukstaf, then a boy of about eight years old. I had a few magazines with me, among them *Sports*

Illustrated. Omar was leafing through it, looking alternately amused and confused. He arrived at a double-page spread of the golfer Tiger Woods on a putting green, a huge crowd in the gallery behind him. At first Omar could not figure out which way the photo went. He looked at it sideways, upside down, turning the magazine round, but in discussion with his younger brothers it was finally determined where the horizon was and thus how to view the photo. Then they had to figure out what might be going on. This took a while, but eventually the group pronounced their conclusion. The guy in the middle with the golf club, Tiger Woods, was an *imam* leading prayers. The gallery was the congregation of the faithful. I remember thinking that was probably pretty accurate. I did not correct the boys on the conflation of golf and religion; I did record the fact that these kids had not yet learned to look at images. They literally did not know which way was up in a photo.

VI. NOSTALGIA

The photos in this book evoke a sense of nostalgia, a longing. The word "nostalgia" is built on "algia," pain. It is normally understood as a kind of intense homesickness or a wistful desire for an imagined past. But there are many pasts in these pictures. There is the past I remember from the time I lived in Tagharghist (surely one source of nostalgia, for me). Since I went so many different times to the mountains, perhaps this is best conceived as a punctuated series of different pasts (Crawford 2010a, 2013). There are also the pasts of the people in the pictures, personal histories I try to understand and occasionally reveal in my writing. There are the moments of the photos themselves, the stories behind the making of each picture, the minutes, hours, and days when Bart was up in the hills. Beyond all of this is a history of village life generally, and the transformation of it that I have focused on elsewhere (Crawford 2008). At an even more abstract level lies our common agricultural past, one that most readers have left behind in what we perceive as our march to the modern. This pastoral past (in black and white) is perhaps the most generic and legible aspect of this book, even if the Moroccan context tinges it with exoticism. All these pasts emerge from the photos simultaneously. If they have "evidential force" (Barthes 2010[1980]:89), what are these photographs evidence of? How do we see them? Which pasts are we seeing, and what are we seeing in them? What do we hope to take from these pasts?

I do not think I am alone with such questions. For emigrants, in particular, Tagharghist is both an iconic place and a real, personal one. It may be surprising, given the awful poverty, but many migrants who make comfortable lives down in the cities still aim to return to the village, or say they do. Some build houses that stand empty but for dreams. Others come back and establish families, or raise their families here, and then leave again. There is something bewitching about this hard place. Migrants are bound to the warm nest of people into which they were born, their community of relatives, friends, and neighbors who have known them forever, who know all their siblings, family, fields, and ancestors, and the names of every rock and tree. This is powerful, alluring, a deep force that draws people back up the asphalt roads into the thinner air. Those who leave for the city take the whole community with them in their hearts, or in the liver, as they would say. And the community evoked by one's gut persistently calls you home, a call that competes with others but is never fully silenced (Spadola 2014).

I have my moments, too, my pasts. I sat on a warm rock with Lahcen Belaid one day in July 1999, for instance, when he was up visiting from Casablanca (Lahcen is not pictured, but his nephew's wife and children are in photo 31—his only remaining blood relatives in the village). It could have been any of a million fleeting seconds in any of hundreds of days, but this one, this moment, has settled in, made a home in me, and is still there today. It is a little like a photo, but it plays on more senses: The day's failing light streams into the canyon in broken shafts; the west-facing cliffs glow red like embers as the valley floor fades

into purple. Smoke from the evening bread ovens curls into the remaining pale blue above; you can smell the juniper twigs crackling in the hearths while sweating women trudge back from the fields stooped under their massive loads of fodder. A group of women saluted us, I remember, laughing and joking, gossiping among themselves. Lahcen and I greeted the women casually and fell back into our shared and silent rapture.

Does Lahcen remember this day as I do? Did this particular moment come to dwell within him as it did in me? In this book, Bart Deseyn has conveyed something of the grandeur of the place, of the awe and ache of moments I still feel: the majesty of the rock, the breathtaking chasm of vertical space, a stupefying peace. Bart has, I think, allowed outsiders to grasp something of the people who commune with such grandeur in their daily lives. This was not the only time Lahcen and I were caught in reverie for this hard world, nor are we the only ones to appreciate it.

Versions of this nostalgia are widespread. Thousands of Berbers in Europe have never lived in villages like Tagharghist but still pine for something about it, still see social spaces like this as a vital part of Amazigh culture, as important to their identity. A past does not have to be real and personal to work its magic in your heart. All histories are works of the imagination, and imagination is slave to no material force, no time or place. A known past is known only because it has been conceived in us presently for our immediate purposes. It is the presence of something manifestly absent that makes the past like photographs, and that makes photographs call up such pasts.

And the people of Tagharghist themselves? The mythical past that urban readers feel in these photos is the everyday present in Tagharghist. Our urbanely conceived history of face-to-face community, a cooperative of intimates with tough lives and powerful bonds, is the contemporary world villagers wake up to every day. They are not ignorant of this. It is not only outsiders who understand that there are other places, other realities that one can leverage for making sense of the present. Villagers are capable of comparing unlike times and places in their own ways. They have their own imagined pasts, in other words, their own understanding of tradition, of what they have surmounted or abandoned or left behind—and their own modernity. This may be represented by headscarves worn the "modern way" (see photos 24, 26, 28 and 36), or Fatima's urban dress (1), or the fashionable callus on Aburrahman's forehead that he achieved through repeated and enthusiastic prayer (photo 5)—a mark he consciously shares with exceptionally pious Muslims across much of the world. A village modernity may not be recognizable to outsiders, but it is conceived by villagers as distinctly modern nonetheless. This suggests that they have their own nostalgia. For those of us who nostalgically find "tradition" in these photos, there is something yearned-for or haunting in them (Sontag 2003:89). Such nostalgia is born of the present.

A VILLAGE IN WORDS AND PHOTOS

STRUCTURES: MACHINES FOR LIVING

Tagharghist seems like many other villages along the Agoundis River, and like thousands throughout the High Atlas Mountains. The houses are built steeply up the mountainside, of mud rammed into giant blocks, one layered upon another to dizzying heights (13). Traditionally village homes were clustered together in a central knot for ease of construction (building onto a neighbor's house means one less wall to raise) and for the purposes of defense (40). The only way to access the open, central plaza of the village (the *assarag*, 7) is through dim, irregular tunnels beneath the houses (8, 9); passing through these feels like entering the underworld.

By contrast, most new construction is apart from this central knot (10, 19, 26). A collection of these recent buildings represents a new "suburb" here, Tagharghist *jdid*, or "new Tagharghist" (look in the background of photo 6 and 27). In the new part of the village the houses have more open, outside space for work, more privacy, and more flexibility of design (since you do not have to accommodate other buildings and established paths). All houses, however, exist in a permanent state of flux, with rooms added to accommodate marriages and childbirth, and older parts of the dwelling slipping ceaselessly into disrepair. Mud houses, even new ones, look ancient because they age quickly, melting in the winter rain and snow; they need constant tending to remain viable.

Both old and newer houses include a room open on one side called *idil* (see photos 12 and 13). Here people do chores from shelling walnuts and weaving blankets to slaughtering animals and washing laundry. This is an ideal place to chat with neighbors, watch for travelers along the road, and sleep in the open air on warm summer nights. People who lack such a room use the rooftop for the same purposes (11). I spent wonderful nights on rooftops in Tagharghist beneath a sky swimming with more stars than I knew existed. Recently people have been adding railings to keep children from tumbling off the edges of the roofs, an innovation that would have been welcome when I lived in the village. My very first night I went to spit toothpaste off the fragile edge of Abdurrahman's roof and nearly fell to my death. Roofs have become more user-friendly since then.

3 Omar Idzdo's house, spring 2013

Inside the houses, most rooms are multi-purpose and lack furniture except for cabinets (3, 15, 16). Carpets are stored in these and pulled out to sit on while eating or watching TV, and blankets and pillows are kept in them during the day. A living room becomes a dining room when a small table is brought in with food or tea; this dining room becomes a bedroom when the table is removed, blankets are brought out from the cupboards, and family and guests recline to sleep where they have been dining. A few houses have urban-style *ferash*, or banquettes, to sit on. For those who have them, these double as narrow beds. Normally everyone sleeps on carpets. Nobody has "his own" room. All rooms are everyone's room, and except for kitchens just about any room can be put to work for just about anything—from entertaining guests (3, 15) to storing onions (17). Naked space is what you make of it (16), and not everyone makes the same sorts of things. As everywhere else, some families are quite tidy and others are not.

Roofs are made from timbers hauled up from the river (74). Across these timbers smaller supporting beams are fitted, often branches from the same tree that supplied the timbers. Sticks are added across the secondary timbers, or sometimes bamboo. Then mud is poured and stamped down on this base. The mud is repeatedly moistened and stomped again to form a smooth,

thick roof with great insulation, albeit little resistance to heavy rain. Some people now put a layer of plastic sheeting between the wood and the mud to help keep out the more devastating rainstorms and the melting snow in springtime.

Only a few men specialize in woodwork, and anyone building a house contracts one of them to help to join the timbers and plumb the walls straight. Usually this *mualim* handles the woodworking, while the family supplies the basic labor of hauling up the mud and pounding it flat into walls or a roof. The interiors of the walls are plastered with either a lime solution or cement, at least partway up. This helps to keep rooms clean and frustrates the bugs that like to live in them.

4 Fatima Ait Ben Ouchen's *anwal*, or kitchen, spring 2013

As walls go up, the excavation of the dirt creates a natural cellar. When the walls are finished and the floor installed (the floor is built the same way as the roof, mud over timbers) the cellar will be where cows are kept and where people sometimes do their toileting. The trails around Tagharghist are too steep and narrow to drive the cows to pasture, so women bring fodder to the cows below the houses. Each spring the manure is dug out, carried in baskets to a mule or donkey, then hauled away and dumped into huge piles where it can cure in the sun. After a few weeks, the cured fertilizer is again packed up in baskets and taken to the fields. Families too poor for a mule or donkey carry everything on their backs.

Each family also has a separate *anrar*, or threshing area, that at first looks like a house (you can see them in the middle distance of photo 6—between the central village in the foreground and the new suburbs in the back). Sometimes these are owned in common by several related households, or a whole lineage; most are built over a storeroom for grain and straw. In photo 27 a family stands on its *anrar* (they are looking over a copy of Bart's previous book) while sheep nibble at the remains of the threshing. During threshing, the dried barley (71) is stomped by a team of donkeys and mules tethered to a central pole (27). Once the barley is pulverized by the hooves of the animals, it is winnowed by men wielding wooden pitchforks made from dried tree branches. All day men toss the stomped barley into the air and let the wind carry the chaff away from the grain. The grain is then scooped into bags and stored. The chaff, or hay, is swept through a temporary hole hollowed out in the deck of the *anrar* and drops like drifting snow into the dark storeroom below.

The most essential room in any house is the kitchen, the *anwal* (4, 20), and central to this is the *takat*, or oven. This hearth holds the living fire at the heart of the home, the furnace that fuels the bodies that work to keep the household alive. Once or twice a day the women of the house knead wheat flour together with their locally grown barley into balls of dough. They press these directly onto the hot, curved inside walls of the oven. Once baked, the bread is peeled off the wall with an iron bar and the burnt bits are chipped away. It comes out as a kind of large bowl. This is *tanoort*, village-style bread that has become so fashionable recently that it is sold at upscale lunch counters in gas stations along the new toll freeways between major Moroccan cities. I find it bizarre to see *tanoort* for sale alongside chewing gum, cigarettes, and lurid advertisements for Magnum ice cream bars.

5 Abdurrahman Ait Ben Ouchen, autumn 2008

Aside from the morning *askeef*, a kind of barley-flour gruel, the main dish villagers eat is called a *tajine* (from the pot in which it is cooked, also called a *tajine*). Typically, this includes a bit of meat with potatoes and other vegetables slow-cooked over a brazier. At mealtime, the household sits around a small table with the *tajine* in the middle. First, any meat is removed and set aside in the lid of the *tajine* for later. It will be divided equally, more or less, though with priority for guests. Then each person is apportioned bread, which they use to dip into the *tajine* to soak up the broth—always with a *bismillah*, or "in God's name," said in thanks for the heavenly bounty. Photo 20 shows two ovens (*tikatin*, the plural of *takat*) and two braziers. When the bread is done, coals from the ovens are scooped into the braziers; then the *tajines* are left to cook on top. (In photo 20, the one on the back is heating a pot for *askeef* while the left one heats a tajine.) Significantly, the household is itself called a *takat*, meaning "oven" or "hearth," which emphasizes the centrality of food to social life. A household includes all the people who eat from an oven or, put another way, all who work to feed the oven that in turn feeds the people. A *takat* is the fundamental social unit, and while women can form a *takat* on their own, no man can do so. A man needs an oven; an oven requires a woman.

Francesca Bray has written of houses as "machines for living" (1998), and indeed, they are, but it is important to add that they are living machines. The thick walls and roof keep people cool in summer and warm in winter, or at least as warm as you can be without any source of heat beyond what bodies create for themselves. The physical structure of the houses is like an enveloping skin for the household, one that lets in the things you need (sunlight, air) and keeps out what you don't want (wind, rain, animals, snow). Food, water and other supplies flow into the house to nurture the bodies that dwell there, and waste is expelled. The skin of a house breathes and ages like any other skin. The house provides a refuge for new generations of humans; people inside them grow to care for their house as their house cares for them. But nothing earthly lasts forever. Villagers pursue their terminal voyage in dialogue with the carapace of rock and mud that sustains them.

A careful look at the architecture of the village reveals an astonishing inventiveness. All houses are built from the same simple materials, yet, like the people within them, no two are exactly alike. There are some basic culturally valued norms of design (windows are small, exterior doors never open into sitting rooms, both kitchens and stables are separated from dwelling spaces) but these norms are expressed with playful creativity. The inhabitants of these idiosyncratic houses are no less particular, no less original. The idea that villagers are alike, as plain as potatoes in a sack, is simply wrong. Some photos reveal this directly. Rachida's jaunty impatience (21) is nothing like Zahra's quiet endurance (67), or the wry determination of Fatima (28)—who resisted having her portrait done, then insisted this photo be taken exactly here, precisely like this. (The spot is so cramped that Bart could not get far enough away to include the customary head-to-foot shot he prefers.) Compare this again to the bemused patience of Mohammed (the shepherd on the right in photo 65) and the contrasting personalities of two friends, Aisha and Naima (24), one sweet and reserved, and the other with eyes that belie a talent for mischief. This much you can see from the photos alone. One might even guess that Abdurrahman (opposite page) is the main conduit by which outsiders come to know Tagharghist, that he is the kind of guy who might run the tourist hostel in the village, and that he was the primary interlocutor of two Peace Corps volunteers who called this village home—as well as one persistently inquisitive anthropologist.

There is also much you do not see. Abdurrahman (5), holding a copy of Bart's book *Amazigh*, with gear supplied by tourist-guests, is also father to Mohammed (55) and Brahim (51), father-in-law to Mohammed's wife Fatime (68, 69), grandfather (through his daughter) to Kebira (photo 32, with her paternal grandfather Omar), and brother-in-law to Hussein (37). In other words, while the photos let you see something of the people, sometimes things difficult to put into words, they do not reveal the connections between people, the social networks vital to who people are and how they live their lives. Individuals exist in relational social space, by which I mean that one's "position" is analogous to left, right, up and down rather than north, south,

east and west. People are constituted socially. One is not "a niece" but some particular person's niece. I can name the relations between people, as I have just done for Abdurrahman, but to grasp the meaning of "granddaughter" or "paternal uncle" you have to imaginatively occupy a social position rather than try to grasp the general meaning of the terms from without. Nobody thinks of her or his paternal uncle as anything like the maternal one, for instance, but each particular uncle is also unique to each niece and nephew—just like anywhere else.

If you settle in a village and want to get to know people, you proceed via the bonds between them. You have to start somewhere, with someone, and move from there to others. Understanding a village is thus like reading a paragraph, or a poem. You come to understand one person at a time, link by link, try to learn something from each, and each person contributes to your understanding of the next. Like a good read, however, larger meanings reveal themselves over time, when you know more people, when the particular can be understood in relation to its relevant others.

Even when you begin a new relationship, as when my neighbor Fatima Id Baj (31) spontaneously greeted me with coffee and we began a friendship, the new links back to what you already know. As I became familiar with Fatima, her husband, and sons, I also learned that Fatima's sister is married to Abdurrahman's cousin (they are the parents of the Fatima in photo 1); Fatima's husband's first wife was a daughter of Mohammed Arbuz (14, 75), and Fatima's step-daughter lives with this Arbuz family—in the same village with her father, but at her mother's father's house. Even the newest family in the village, the Ibn Aissa, who immigrated to Tagharghist only a couple of generations ago and are not even counted among the "real" people of the village, are now connected link by link via blood and marriage to everyone else who is here. (The newest Ibn Aissa is in photo 23). In short, people are comprehensible through other people, through the rich and intricate common body of kinship and marriage, friendships and antagonisms. Who you are is partly a function of where you are from, your *tamazirt*, but *within* the place you are from there are fine-grained distinctions, a social structure that bears on your character even as it sustains your everyday material life.

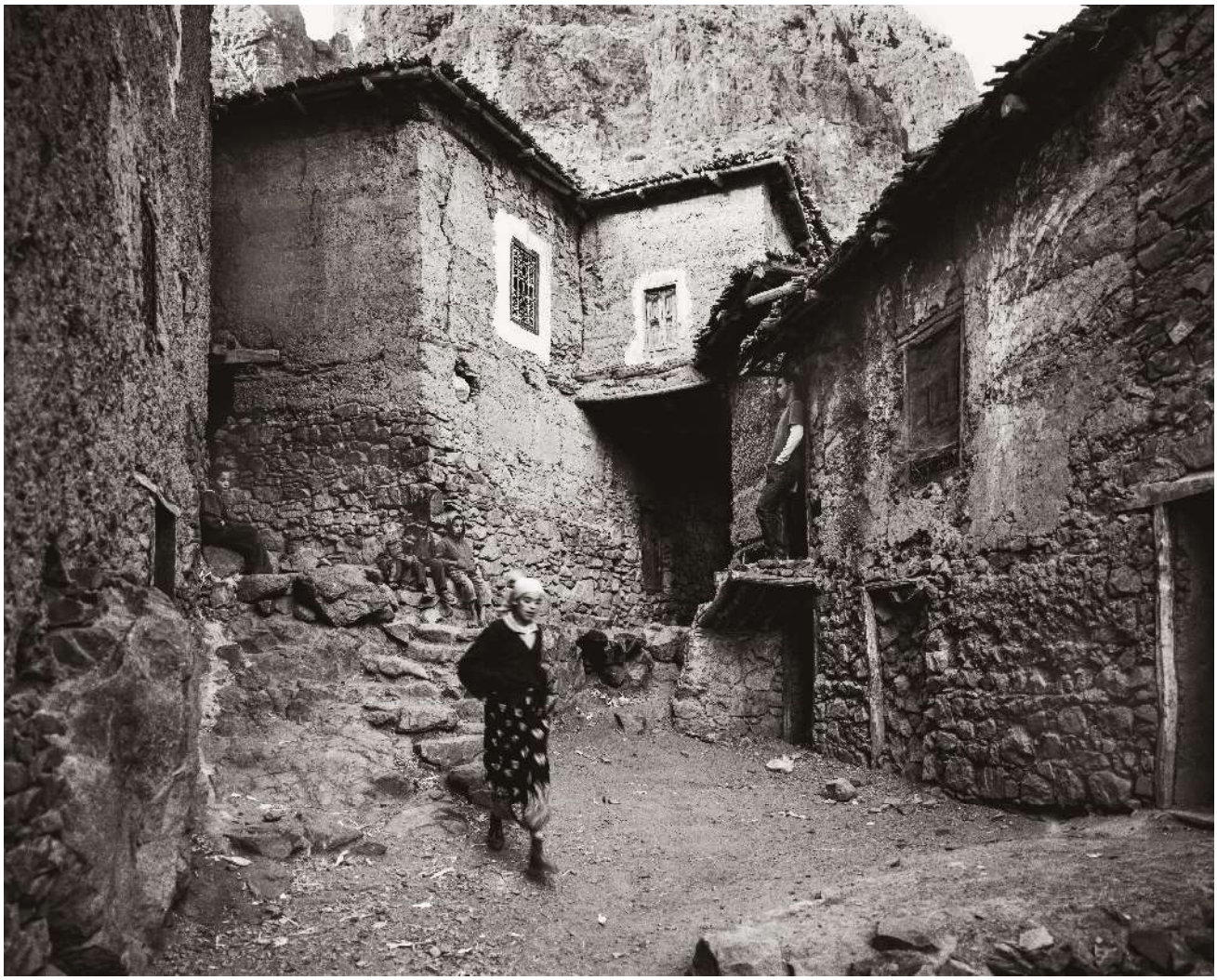
Importantly, these links are never simply given (Rosen 1984). People employ potential connections, actualize them, build on them, negotiate, and sometimes even invent, the relations that matter. But there are basic patterns. The fundamental social architecture of the village, for instance—the main way that people are considered to be linked—is through their patrilineages, the line of descent through the father. Each patriline is called an *ighs* or "bone." Thus the Ben Ouchen, Id Baj, and Idzdo are each a "bone." The bones are internally structured, again by links between men, so that the whole social world could be ideally mapped like a branching tree. Indeed, part of my job as an anthropologist was to draw just such a map. The older men loved to quiz me about this, to ask about this or that dead relative's wife, where she was from, how many kids they had. My genealogical map made clear sense to them. Understanding such connections was exactly what the old men thought I should be doing.

What I found out over time, of course, is that reality here does not match the stated ideal any more than it does where I normally live. The Ait Ben Ouchen family, for instance, constitutes more than half of the population of the village, and so the village family tree is really a very lopsided and bushy thing, with some branches multiplying while others wither away to nothing, or break off and move to the city. Because there are so many of them, the Ben Ouchen are usually identified by one of their constituent branches—the Ait Ali, the Ait Hussein, and so forth ("Ait" and "Id" means "people of," so the terms can be used to refer to any sized group). While parts of the Ben Ouchen family are among the poorest in the village (which is what happens when a father divides his land between many sons), as a whole this bone dominates local politics. Abdurrahman, in turn, dominates the Ait Ben Ouchen.

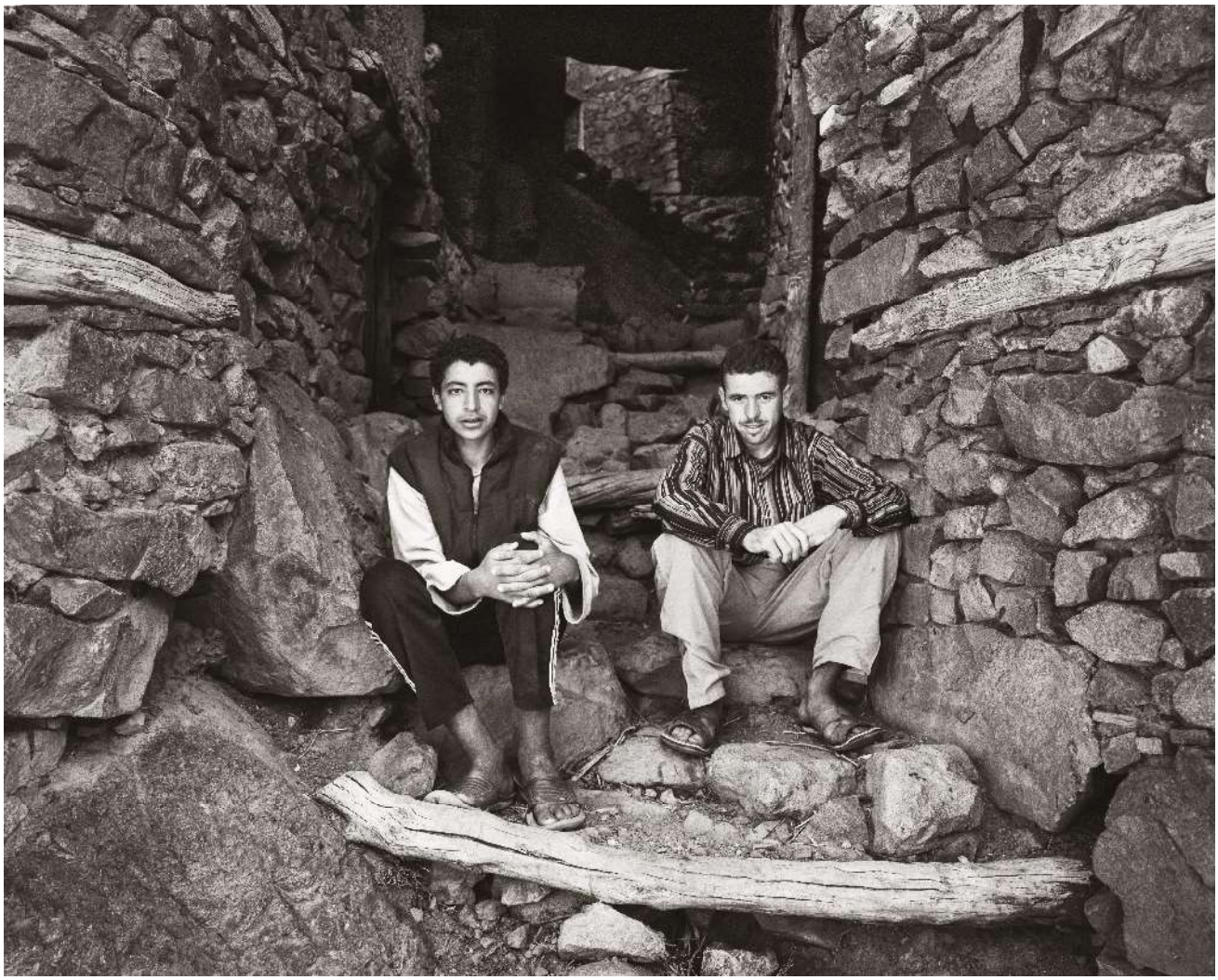
Still, this is only the story of the men. Some 80% of Tagharghist's women leave to marry outside the village. They depart from their natal lineage and go to work for another. To replace them, women from other villages leave their own childhood homes behind and move to Tagharghist. That is why Fatime Ait Bayborik (68, 69) is the only Bayborik in the village, and Kebira Ait Salah (14) and Rqia Ait Mohammed (73) are the only ones with their patronymics. They are from other lineages in other villages and have married into Tagharghist. Women typically leave the places of their birth, but they never give up their lineage name; a woman is always a part of the bone into which she was born, and she can, hypothetically, always go back.

The fact that most of the photos of women in this book are of the 20% minority born in Tagharghist is significant. Pictured are women from here, women who have known every trail, field, and tree since they were girls. For these women getting married only meant shifting from their fathers' to their husbands' fields; they are as comfortable in the landscape as they are with the men (with whom they have grown up, and about whom they know everything). Like the men, the pictured women know this place; they remember me from years ago when I came to live here; all of their relatives know me, and now they have come to know Bart and Abdelkrim as they stand behind the camera. Surely some of this familiarity, this confidence, enlivens the photos. Women who marry into a village from some other place have a different, more distant relationship to their new home, and the men who dominate it.

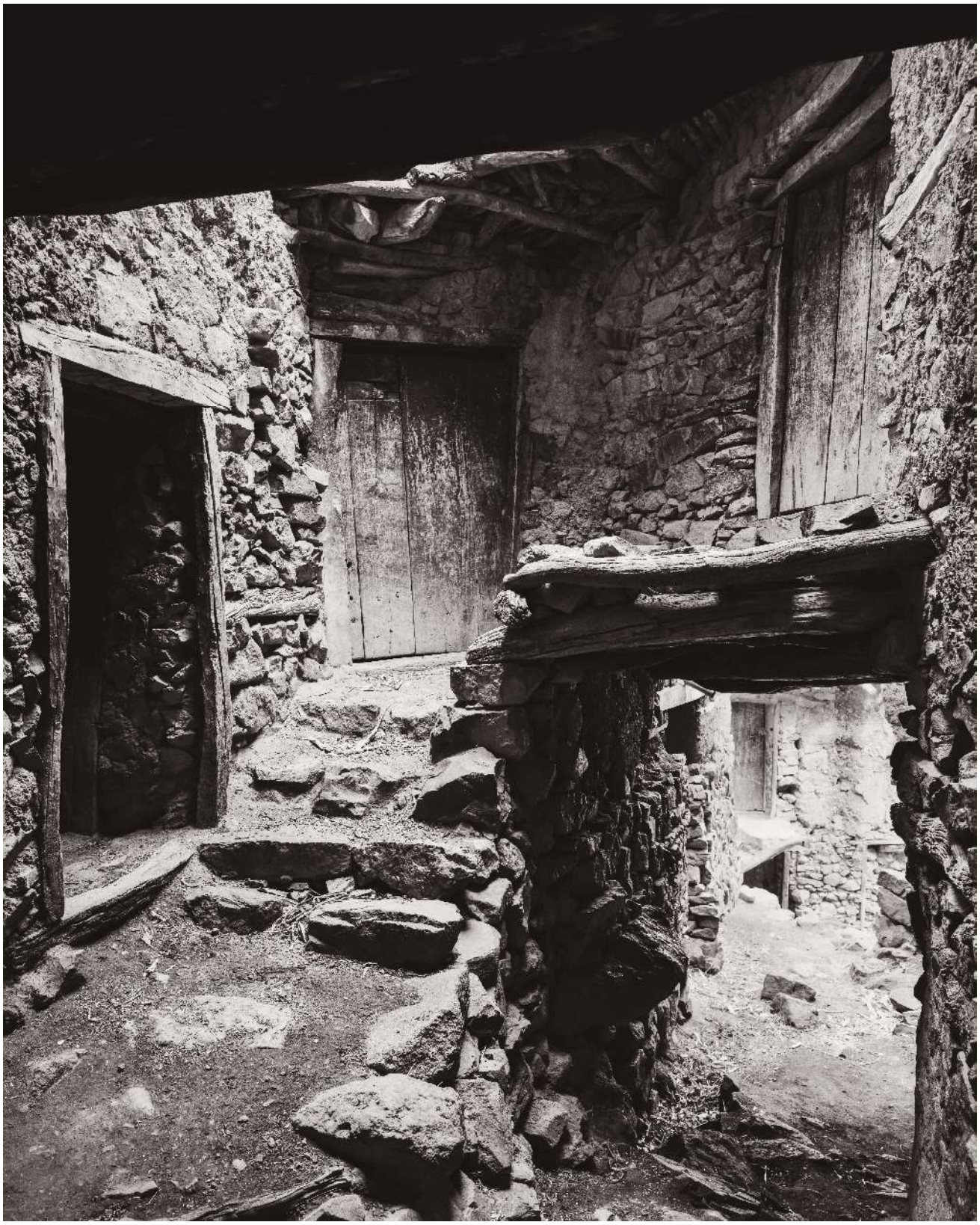
The majority of the women, the 80% who have married into Tagharghist from somewhere else, tend to be absent from the pictures, and the exceptions usually have specific reasons for being photographed. Fatime Bayborik (68, 69) is here because she is Abdurrahman's daughter-in-law, for instance, and he is a major proponent of this work. Kebira Ait Salah (14) is pictured because her husband Mohammed (14, 75) asked for this portrait to be taken so that copies could be distributed to their children in the city. These two women—and the others like them, the majority—are typically as invisible in village politics as they are in the photographic record, and yet they do the important job of connecting Tagharghist to other places. Because women usually relocate, they provide a kind of social circuitry through which villagers move out beyond the village, and even into the city. When people travel, in other words, they follow family connections almost exclusively forged by women—their mother's family who remain in the village she is from, or the places their aunts, sisters, and daughters have married to. Men have always relied on women to weave the insular village bones into the wider social body of the mountains, and now they rely on them for connections to the city. The pride and confidence of the women in the photos is from the minority who do not leave, who remain truly at home to dwell where they were born in the named landscape they have always known and still work today. There is a solid confidence even among the youngest girls the photos, one that many will lose as they are called to marry elsewhere, to reproduce other lineages for relative strangers.



7 the *assarag*, or central plaza, autumn 2008

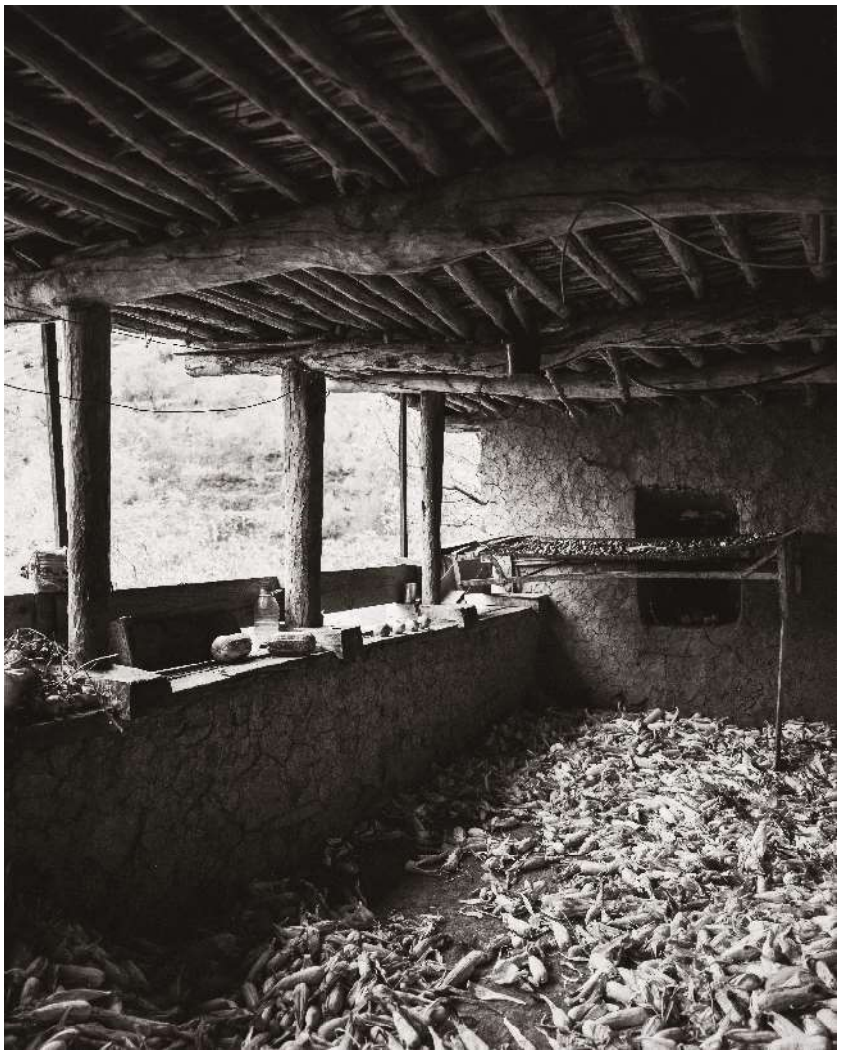


8 Lahcen Ben Mohammed and Brahim Id Baj, autumn 2008

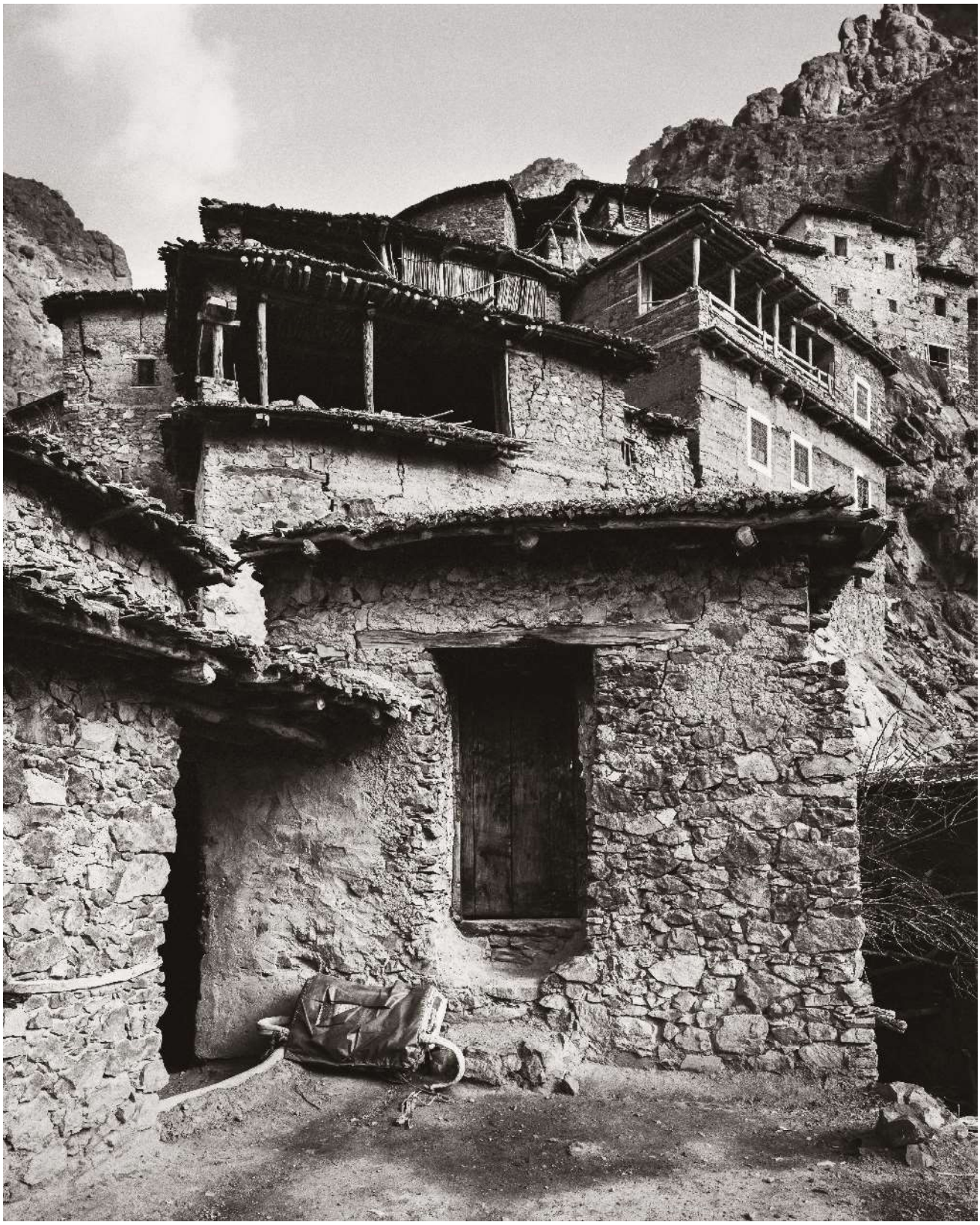


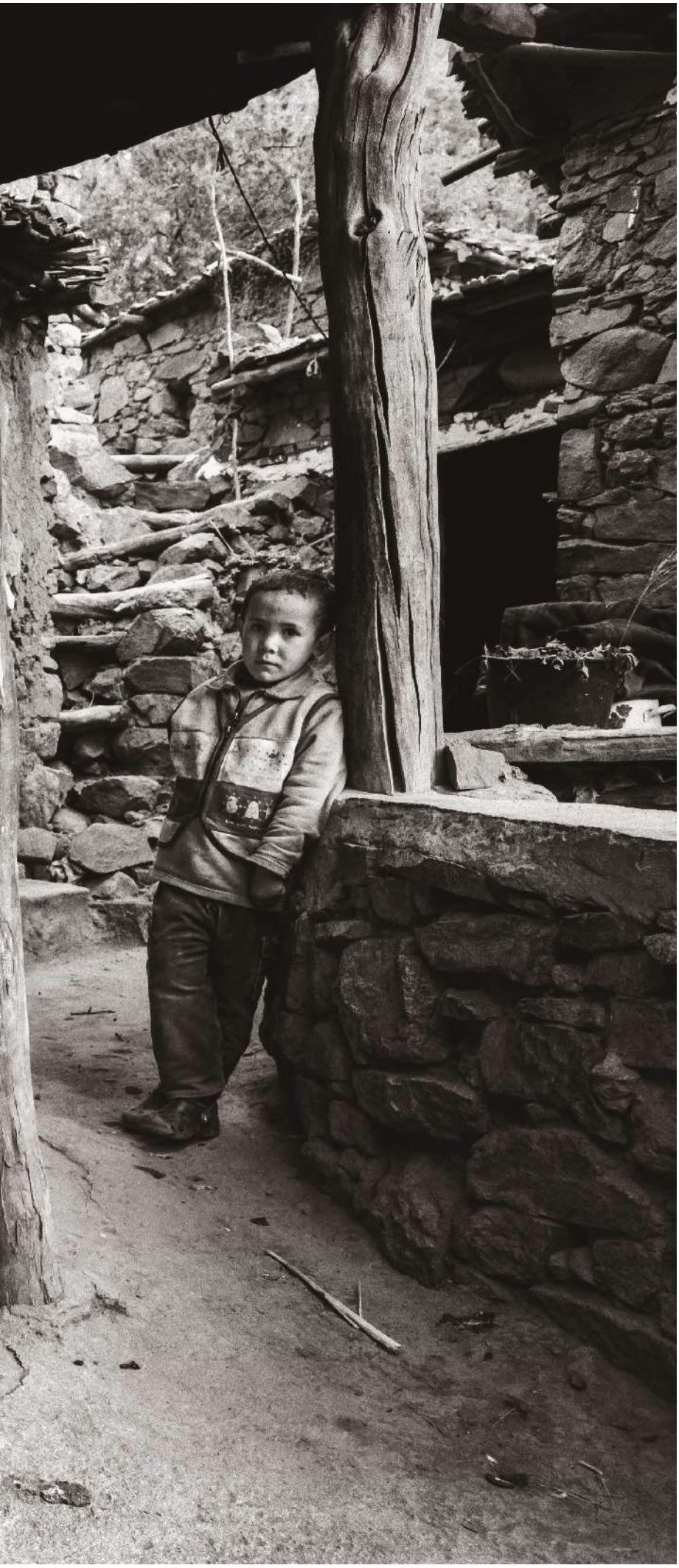
10 Mohammed Id Baj's house, autumn 2008

11 Idzdo houses in the upper part of the village, autumn 2008



12 *idil* at Mohammed Ait Ben Ouchen's house, autumn 2008
13 houses with *idiln*, autumn 2008





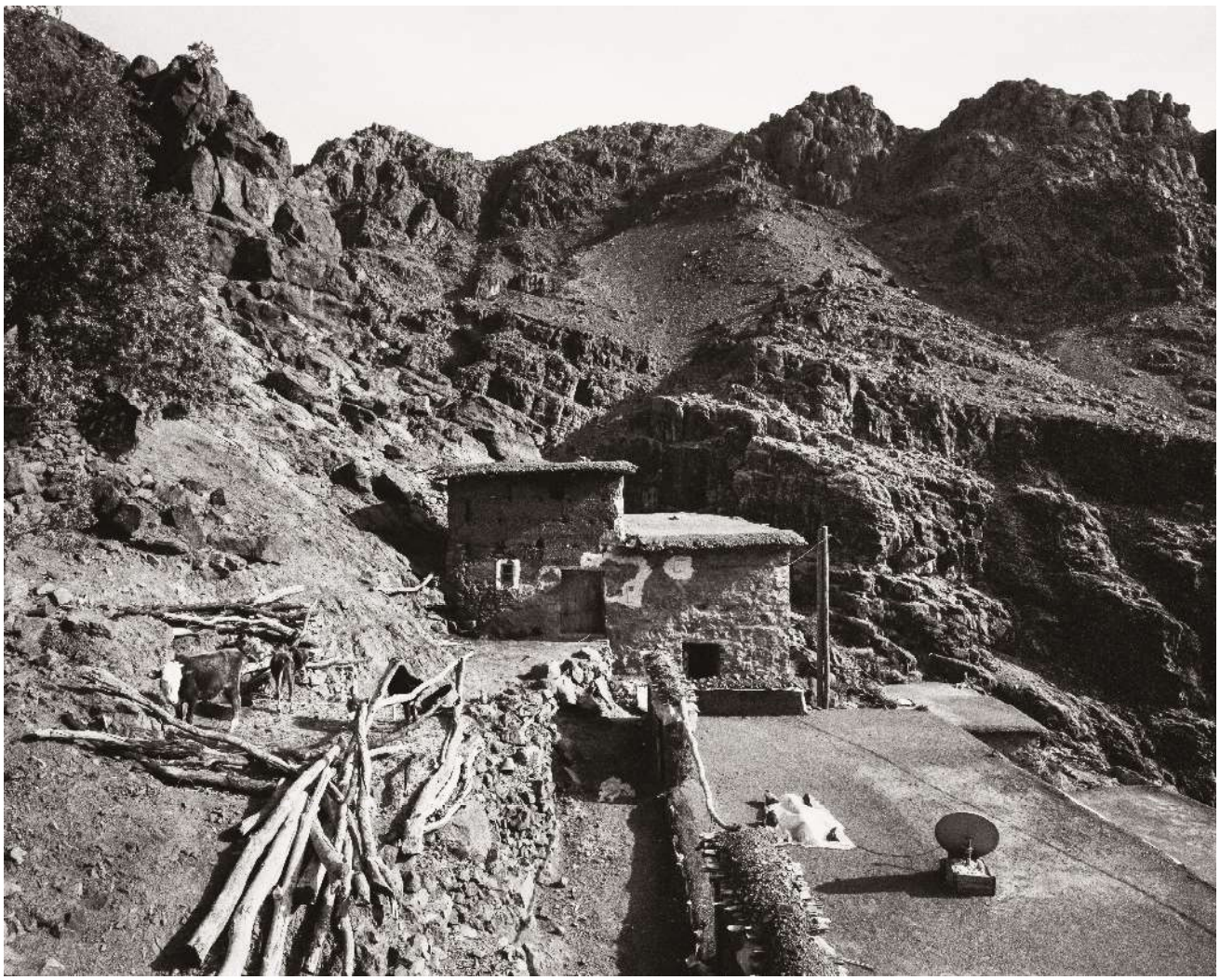
14 Mohammed Arbuz and Kebira Ait Salah
with their grandson Hassan, spring 2013

15 Hamad Ait Ben Ouchen's house, spring 2009

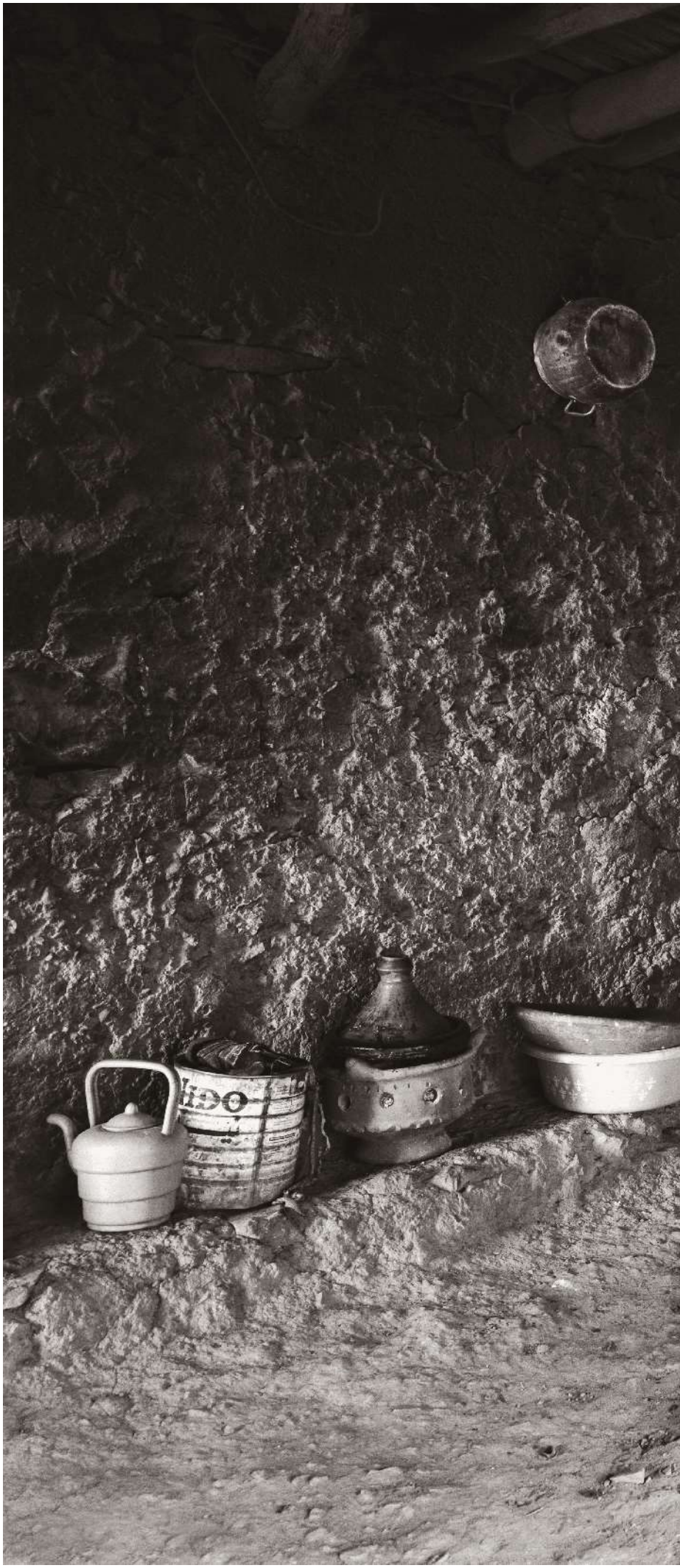
16 Mohamed ou Abdurrahman Arbuz's house, spring 2013

17 Abdurrahman Ait Ben Ouchen's former house, autumn 2008

18 Idzdo houses in Tagharghist, spring 2013

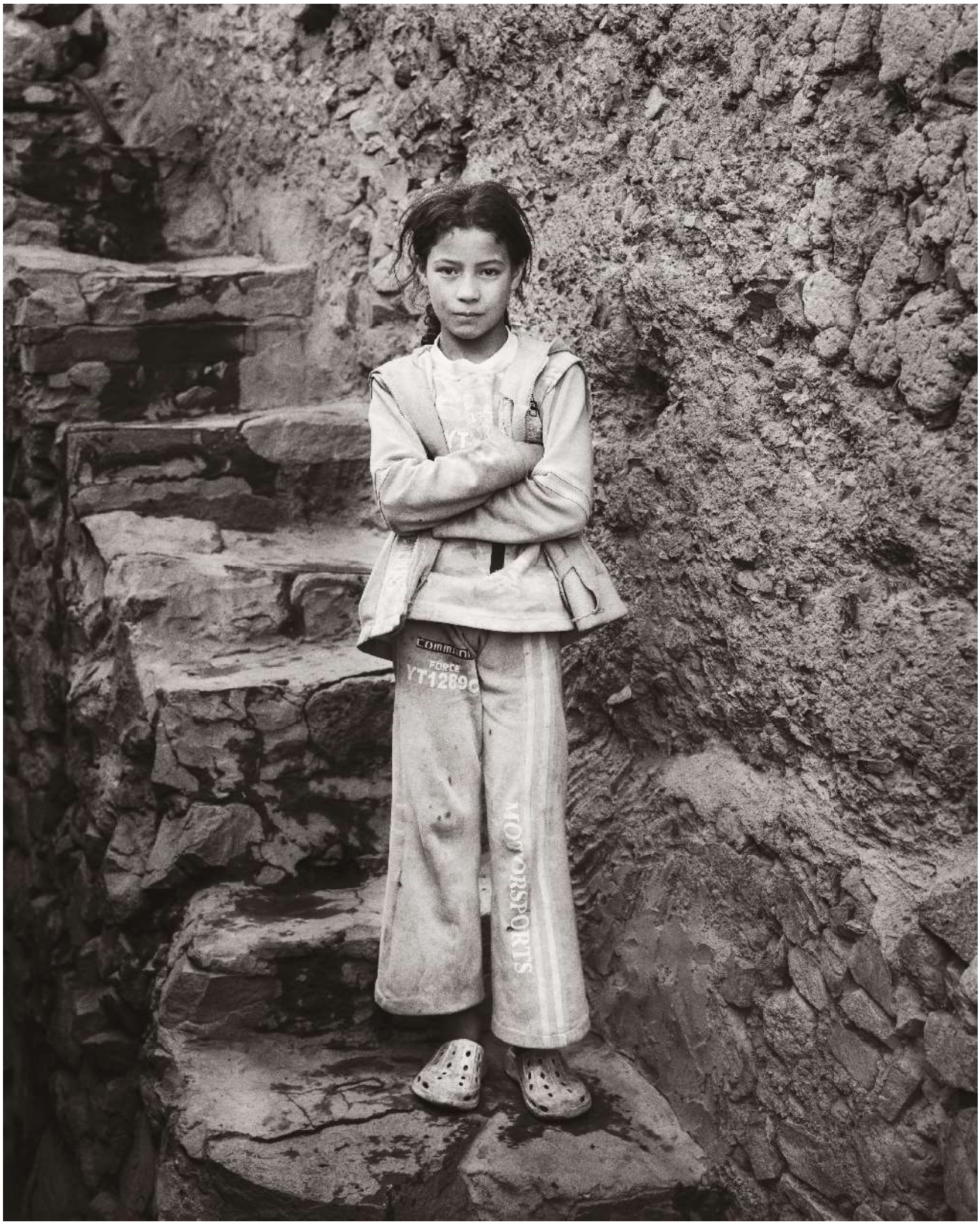


19 Hussein Ait Ben Ouchen's house in Tagharghist *jdid*, spring 2013



20 Fatima Id Baj's *anwal*, or kitchen, autumn 2008

21 Rachida Arbuz, autumn 2008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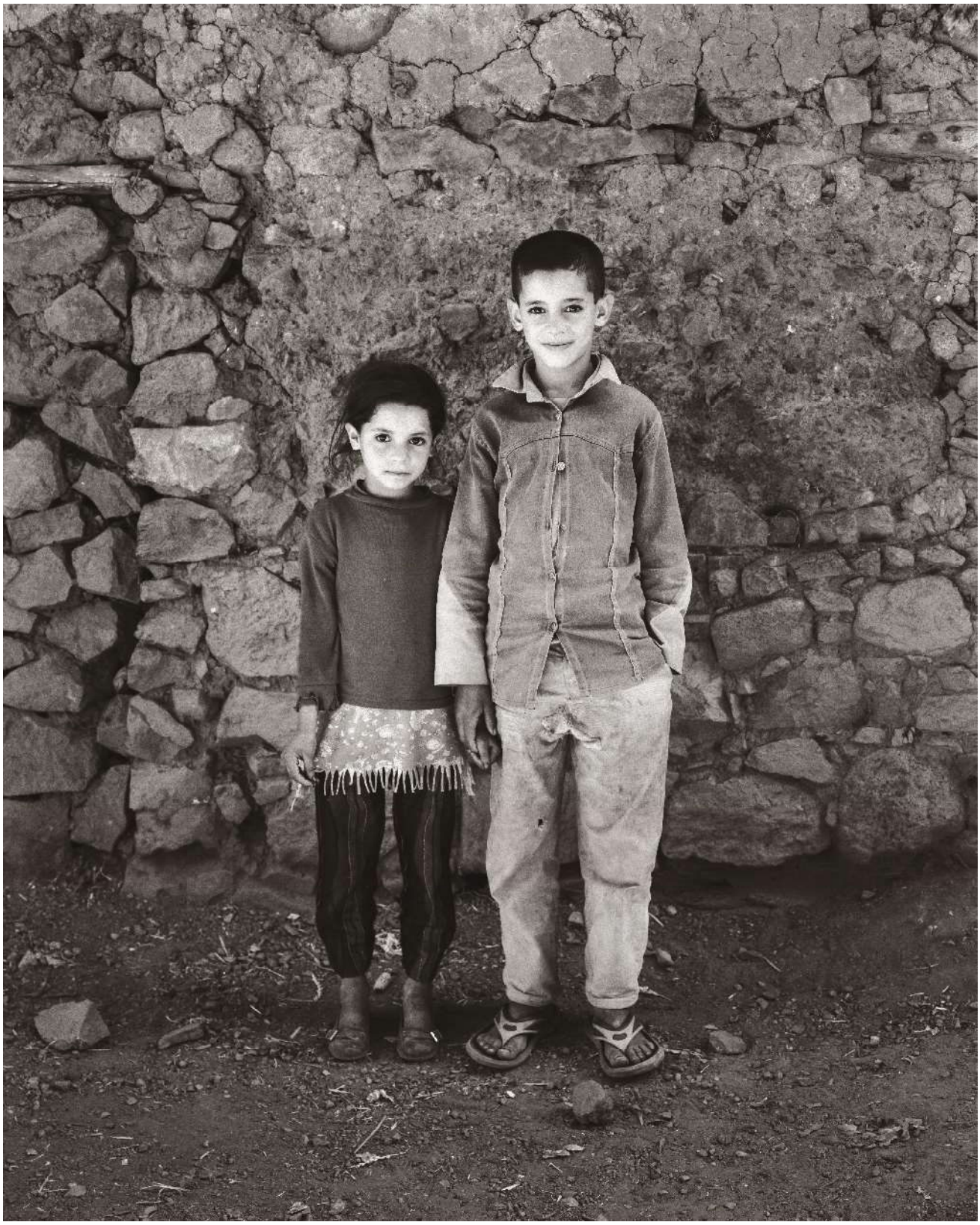
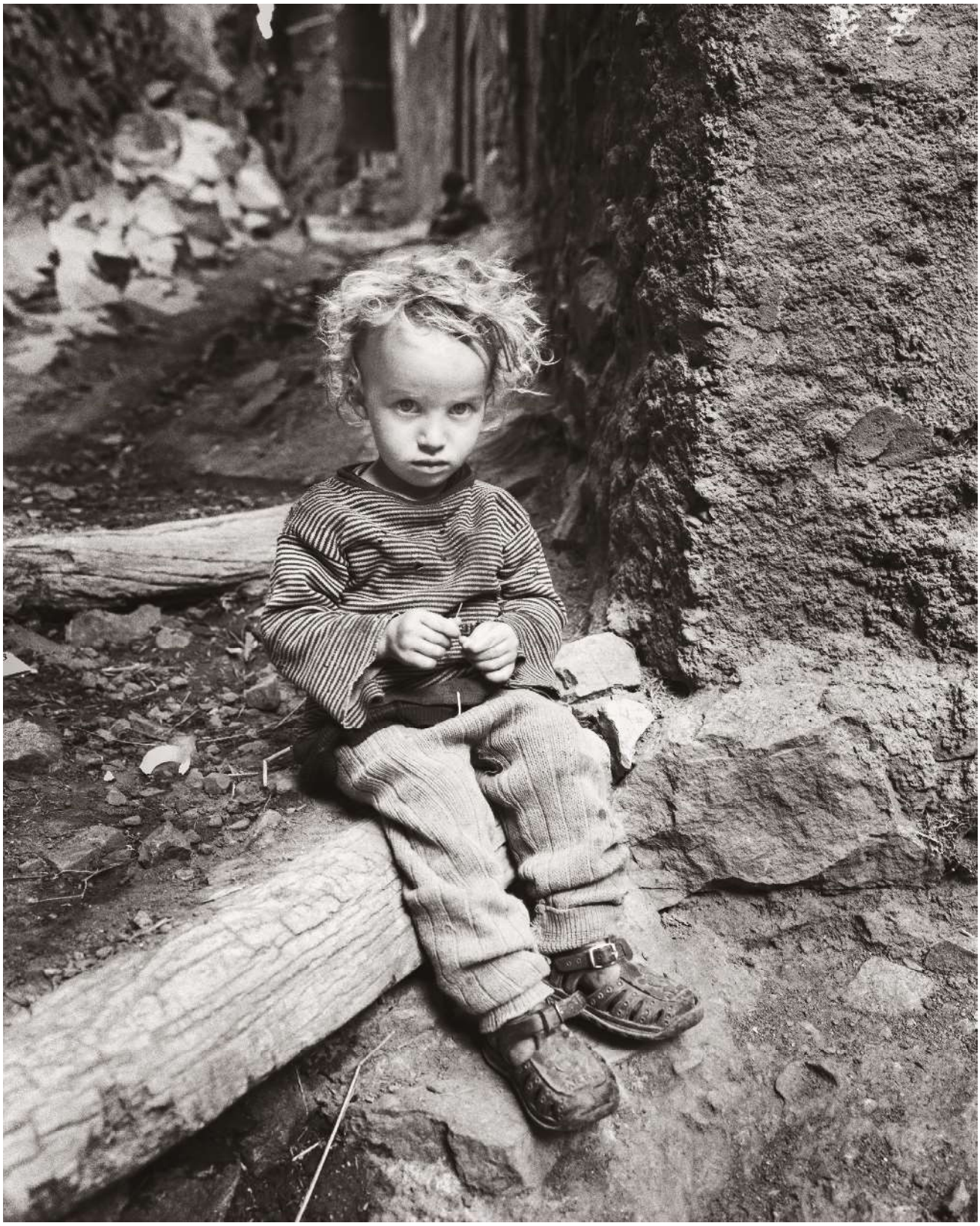
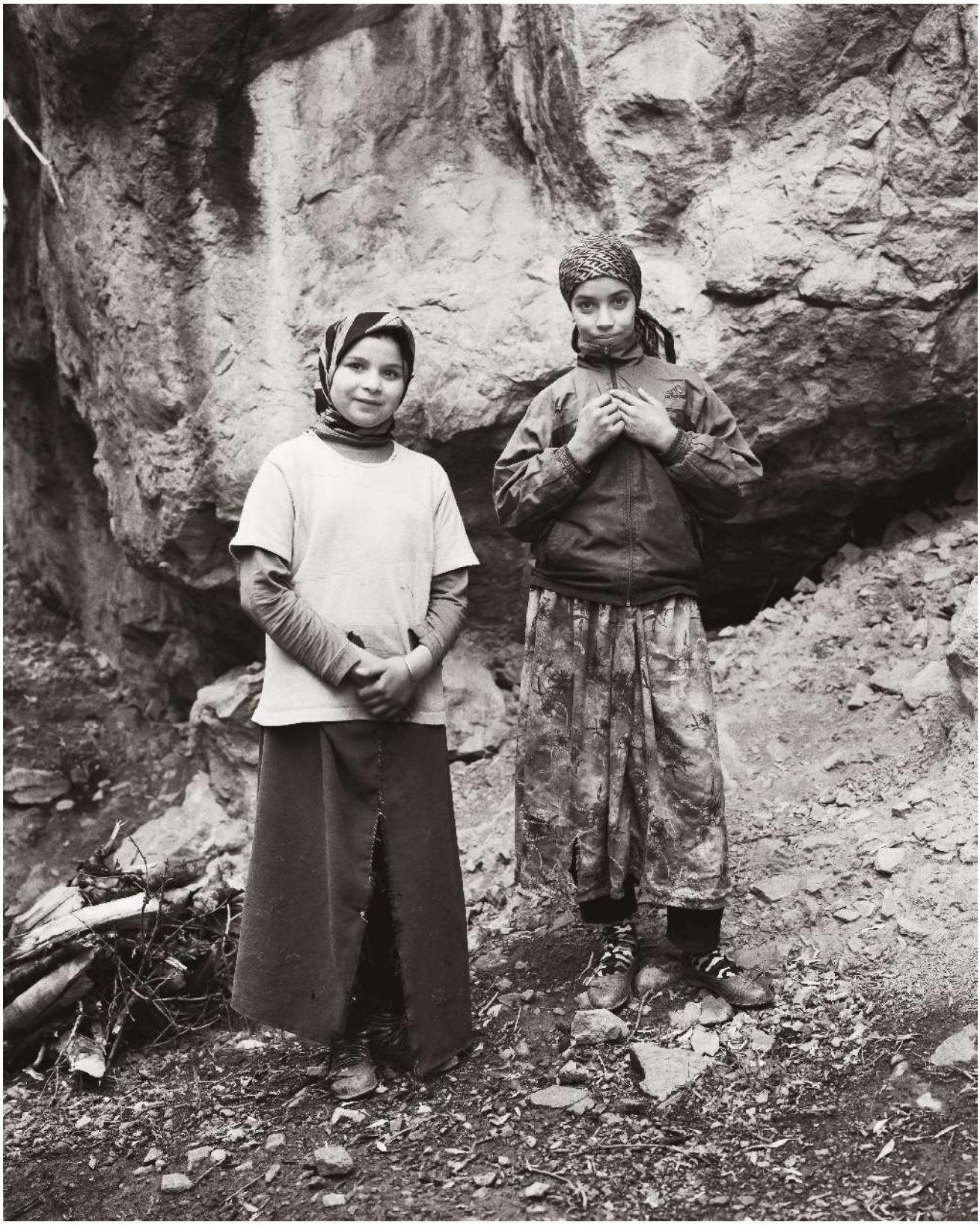
22 Fatima and Nourdine Ait Ben Ouchen, autumn 2008

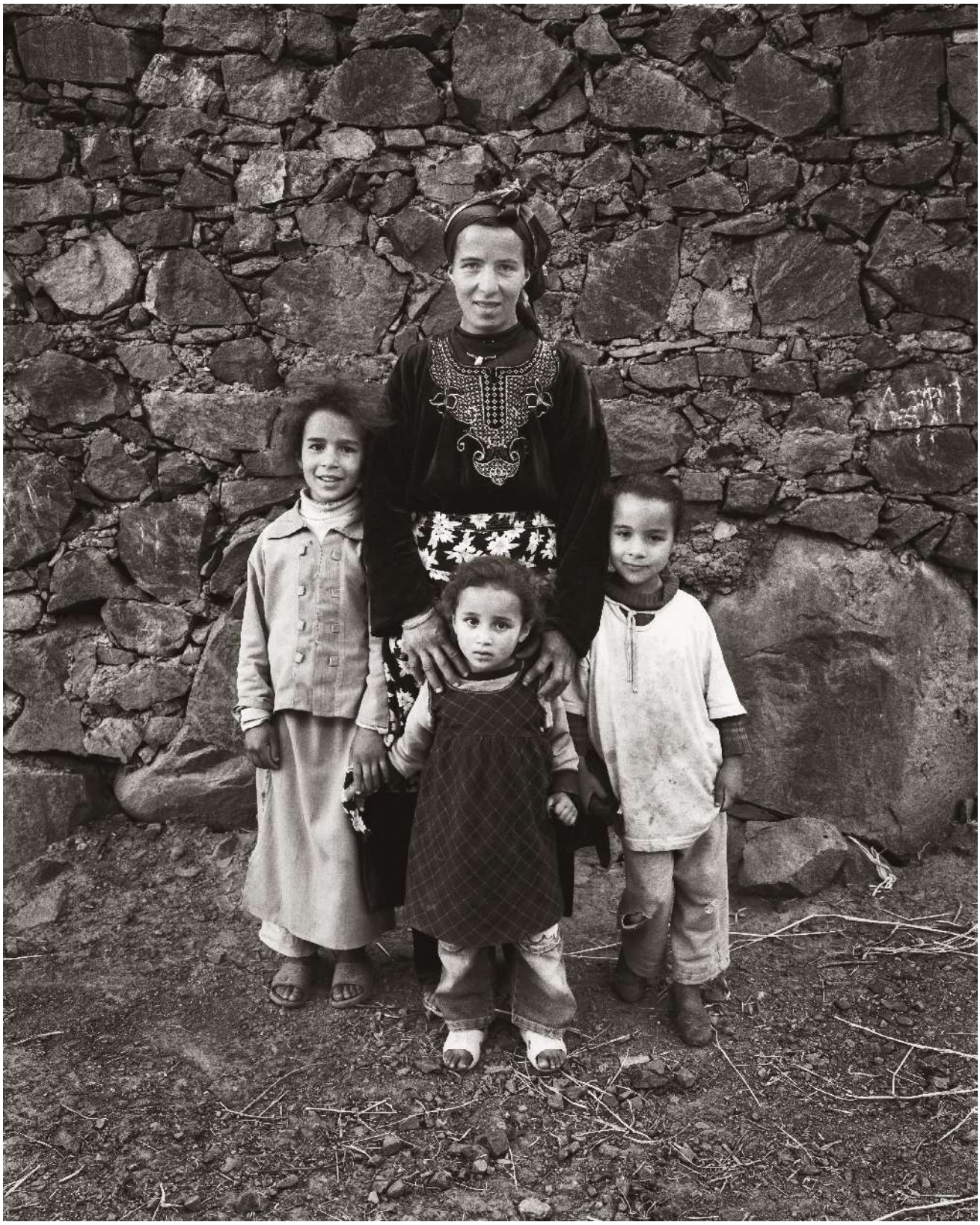




23 Khadija Ben Aissa, spring 2009



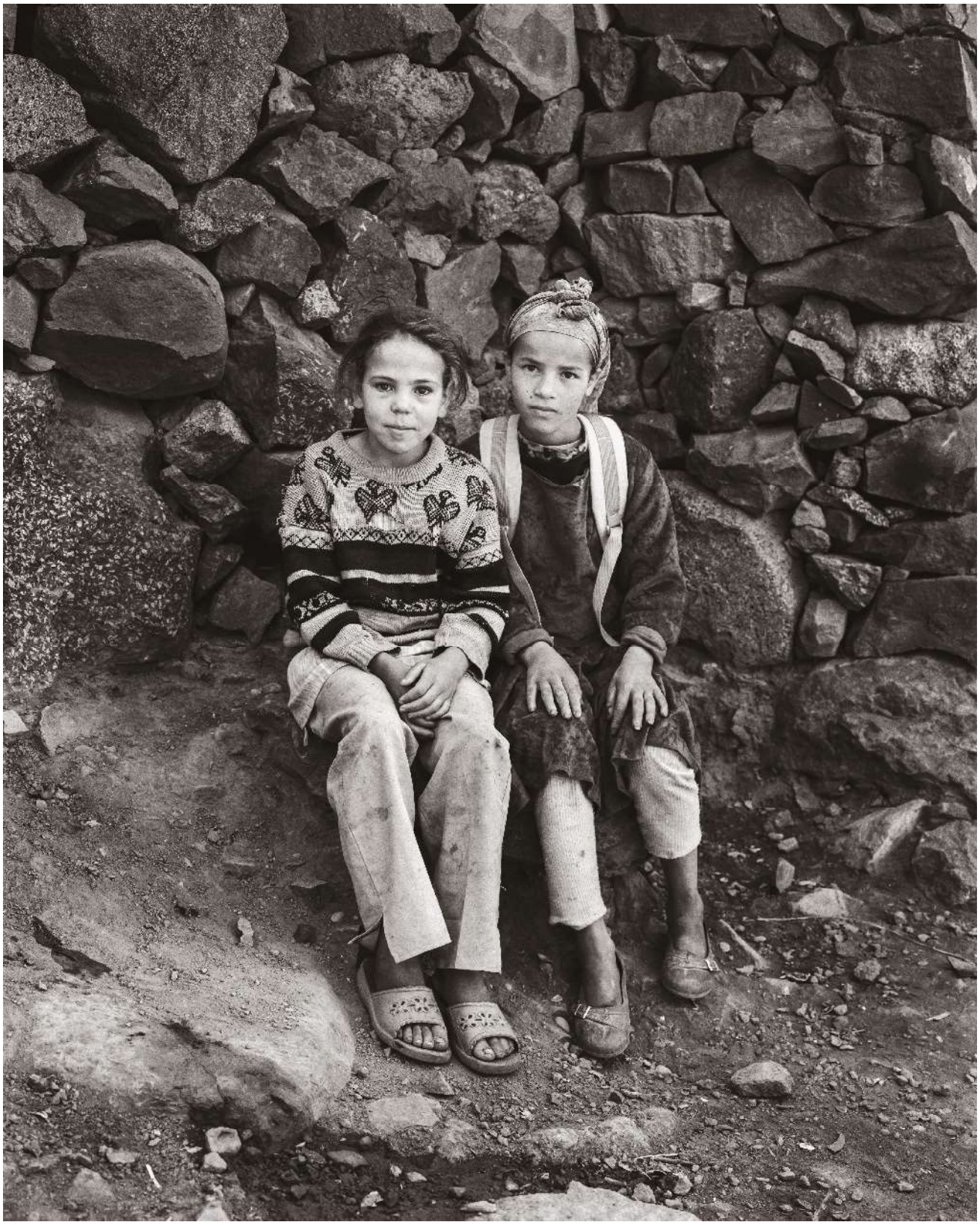
25 Fadma Arbuz with her nieces Mina, Latifa and Zahra Idzdo, spring 2009



26 Hussein, Aisha and Hassan Ait Ben Ouchen, spring 2009

27 *anrar*, or threshing area, spring 2013

29 Malika Arbuz and Aisha Ben Aissa, autumn 2008



30 Abdelhaq Ait Ben Ouchen, spring 2013

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31 Fatima Id Baj with her children Hicham and Zahra, autumn 2008

32 Omar Idzdo with his granddaughter Kebira, autumn 2008

PUBLIC SPACE

The basic economic unit in Tagharghist is not the individual, but the household. No individual can exist on her or his own; all need to be assembled into, or grafted onto, this fundamental building block of society. Households are best considered as the people who share resources and work for a particular hearth, the people who "operate" a house (whether or not they actually live in the same house). Most households are headed by a patriarch; all are sustained by a woman, or group of women, via their oven, or *takat* (20). The patriarchs of the households are conceptually tied together into lineages, at least for some purposes (especially public labor and a few other village-wide tasks), but internally households are structured by age and gender (with older people having authority over younger, and the senior male having authority over everyone). Usually households are built of family connections, though many different relationships can be included or excluded depending on who gets along with whom, who has land, and who is able-bodied but landless and needs to work for the propertied.

Houses themselves are "private" space, but not in the same way as Euro-American houses. There are few personal possessions within them, for one thing, and few personal spaces that can be said to belong to anybody. Even clothes and shoes are more or less communal—generally, if they fit, you can wear them so long as nobody else is already doing so—and there are few storage facilities for personal belongings. The basic armoire in the living room generally holds glasses, teapots, and other materials needed to entertain guests properly (16). There are locked rooms for supplies, with the matriarch of the household usually holding the key to that room. (Women generally wear them on a string, as you can see in photo 1.) The patriarch may keep a few of his personal things in here, but the bulk of the supplies are for the sustenance of the household as a whole. There are no photos of these rooms. They are not for public view.

While guests are always welcome, they are treated differently from everyone else and are set apart from household members. The people who go into a house without knocking, without acting as guests, are those who work for it, those who contribute their labor to it, and who eat from its oven without invitation. So, for instance, while Khadija Idzdo's brother Hussein (37)

sleeps at his own house, he enters his sister's home as someone who belongs there because all of his land and his labor are considered part of Khadija and Abdurrahman's household. This household is headed by Abdurrahman Ait Ben Ouchen (5), but it includes two Idzdo lineage members (Abdurrahman's wife Khadija and her brother Hussein 37) and a third lineage represented by Fatime Ait Bayborik (68, 69, who came to Tagharghist from another village to marry Abdurrahman's oldest son Mohammed 55).

By contrast, Khadija's other brother has no rights in this household, despite the fact that he is the most powerful political actor in the valley. This brother is *amghar*, the official who reports to the government on the whole of the Agoundis Valley, but he has his own household several villages away. While still "family," he is not part of his sister's household; he is not a member of this economic unit, and he would enter the house only after being invited in as a guest.

"Public" space can be as regulated as "private" space, at least in some ways. There are groves of trees owned by lineages rather than individuals, for instance, and even single trees with multiple owners. These are hardly "open access," but they are not vested in individuals. The central square of the village, the *assarag* (7), is certainly open to anyone passing through, but not just anyone can hold a dance or a wedding there: you need to be a member of the village to do that. The mosque (44), which looks just like any other house on the outside (it is to the right of the two men visiting from the city in photo 8), is more avowedly public. Any Muslim is welcome in the mosque (and from a village perspective Christians too—it is only the national government that forbids Christians in mosques), but it would feel awkward to walk in without being accompanied by somebody from the village. The antechamber to the mosque is as much a men's social club as it is a religious area. Especially in the late afternoons, groups of older men sit and gossip or look out onto the road below. It feels like a private club, however adamant villagers are that it is public.

So the mosque is a curious sort of public space. Young men may be serious about their religion, but they do not necessarily spend their free time at the mosque—unless the old men are absent. If outsiders observe that Moroccan villages are notably homosocial (both women and men prefer to socialize in same-sex groups), they are also geronto-social (younger men avoid the company of older men and vice versa). This is less a generation gap in the Western sense than a fundamental social cleavage. While all men are free to speak at the *jmaa*, or public council, the old men control all the land and younger men work for them. Until you own land, that is, until your father dies, you are constrained by both a powerful cultural veneration of elders and the practical issue of having no independent means of subsistence. Land is power in an agricultural society; the old men control all the land.

Women pray in their homes, on rooftops, or in the fields. They also have their own places in the village where they congregate, places any self-respecting man avoids or hurries past. Before the installation of the drinking water system, one of these was the spring from which water was drawn (it is just beyond the shrine in photo 36). In this sense, the drinking water system represents one of the great calamities of progress. While hauling water for the household was difficult, it also established the spring as a feminine zone, especially for girls and younger women. Boys would "happen" to come by to flirt or they would furtively observe from some distance, but the girls had a place to go every day, multiple times a day, that served something of the same role that the mosque did for the old men. The women still have a special spot just beyond the *assarag* beneath one of the tunnels (it is through the tunnel to the right in photo 7). Men who use this route keep their eyes down and scurry by. This spot is controlled by the older women. With the move away from using spring water, the girls lost an excuse to congregate and their place to do so.

34 fields at Agouni n'ait Anou, spring 2013

Women are also more likely to visit shrines, especially if they can make the case that they have an ailment known to be cured by the *mrabit* (or *marabout*) buried there (36, 42). Disparaged by the proponents of a purer, more textually based Islam, these shrines have been sacred places for a very long time, in some cases before Islam even arrived in these mountains. The *marabouts* buried at a shrine are thought to have *baraka*, a kind of life force that can heal the sick, cure infertility, and generally bless the people who worship there. There are any number of supernatural specialties. In Tagharghist the shrine is dedicated to Sidi Haj Birkia (36—the shrine is on the left). He is said to be a Senegalese *marabout* who came here a thousand years ago, though he has no special therapeutic powers. The *marabout's* home is built next to the old spring, suggesting that it may have been a sacred place even before the local conversion to Islam, before the saint himself came to these mountains. While I lived in Tagharghist, the primary use of the shrine was for communal meals, called a *maarouf*. Unlike a *fishta*, or party, these always included a ritual sacrifice, sometimes very elaborate ones (Rachik 1990, 1992). Shrines in general are open to anyone, so they are "public," but they are often associated with women; sometimes overseen by guardians, shrines are becoming less popular than they used to be (Newcomb 2013).

35 a *targa*, or irrigation canal, autumn 2008

The mosque school serves a more limited clientele than the shrine (46). Here the children learn the basics of their religion, like how to pray, and they memorize key *surat* from the Quran. Other lessons take place, too, depending on the particular *fqih*, or religious leader, like basic math or the Moroccan dialect of Arabic useful in the city. Since the *fqih* is paid partly by the government's ministry of religious affairs and partly by the villagers themselves, a child cannot attend unless the household contributes to his maintenance. The contract between the villagers and the *fqih* provides lunch and dinner every day, which are prepared in rotation by the village households. The contract also includes a yearly harvest-time payment of specified quantities of butter, grain, wool, and other village products. The disadvantage to this system is that the villagers have to pay something towards their own religious instruction. The advantage is that they get to decide each year if they want to continue with the services of the religious teacher or fire him and get another. If the villagers will not pay, the *fqih* is left with only his miserable government salary and he will very likely move on. This gives the villagers some control of their children's education.

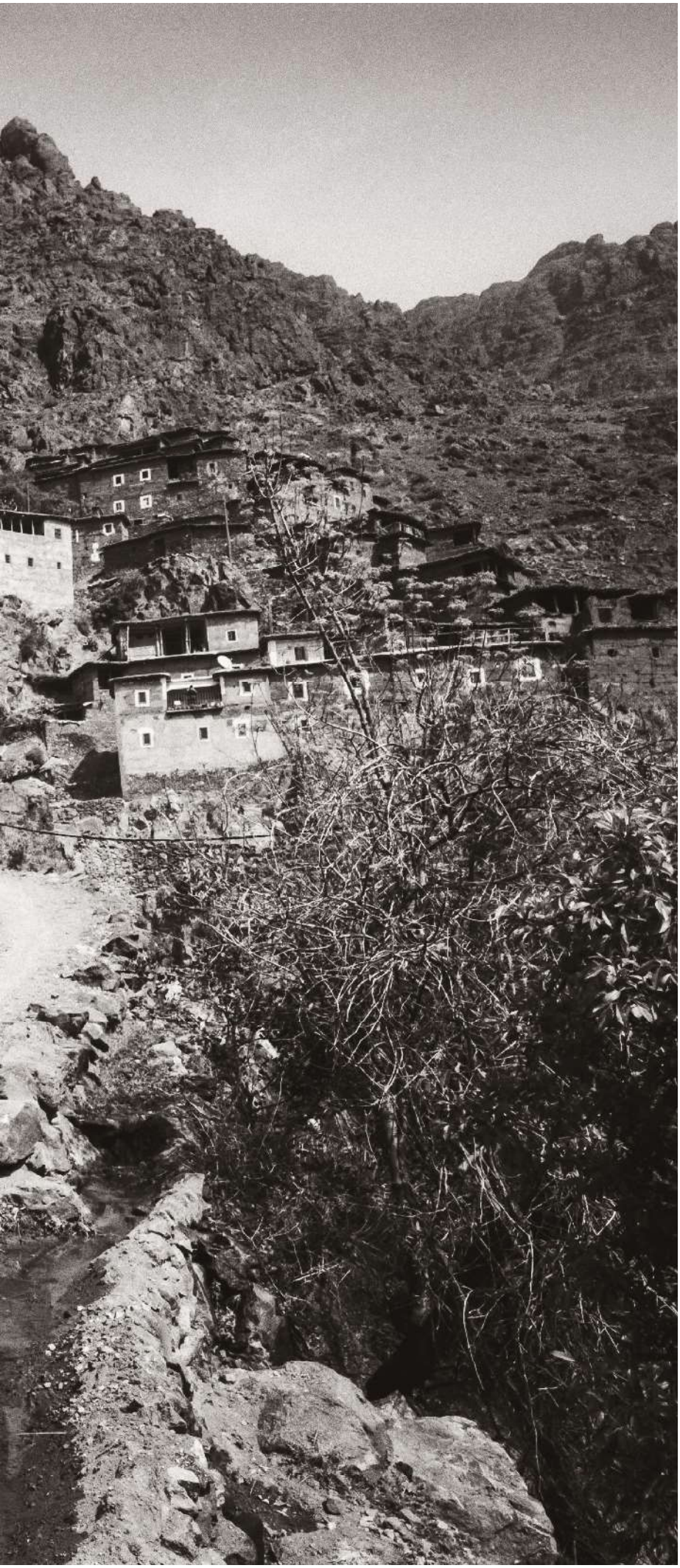
To study under the *fqih* (46) and use a *luh* (the boards from which Quranic verses are memorized, photo 45) a family needs to be part of the village meal rotation that supports the mosque. However, the new government school (43) is different. Here what

is required for attendance is that a father has properly registered a child with the authorities in the district capital, and that a child is listed on a father's identity card. In the past, this was a problem for the few illegitimate children in the village, but the law has been amended so that all kids can attend school even if they were born out of wedlock. In the cities, it is a horrible curse to be born out of wedlock (Bargach 2001), but in the village people are more relaxed. There may be tension, especially between the women involved (the wife of a philanderer and the mother of his child, for instance), but the shame of bastardy is not so terribly inflicted on the child. A fatherless child is not avoided or ridiculed, at least within the village.

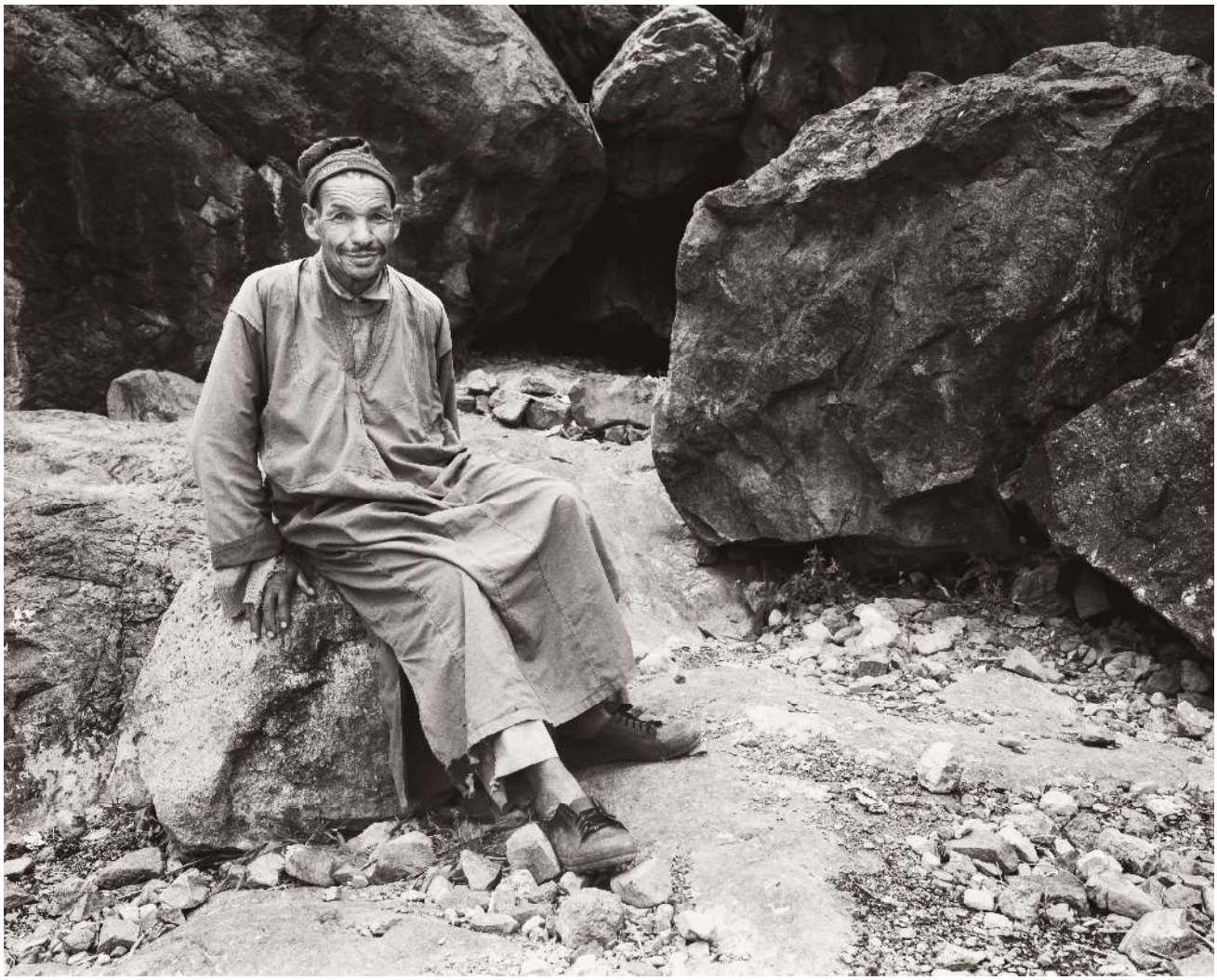
The content in the new school is different, too. The new school teaches the national curriculum—including, as you can see in the back of photo 43, the fact that "whale" in French takes a feminine article—and the teachers are often urbanites. Some urban teachers bring with them a profound disdain for mountain communities. One told me that villagers are "like animals" and "cannot be taught." As we go to press in 2014, Tagharghist is blessed with a truly wonderful teacher who seems to care about his pupils and enjoy teaching them.

Leaving the central knot of the village, the road is fully public space, available to all, and even the paths that run between the fields can be legitimately traversed by anybody. Fields, however, are private (except for a few owned by the government's Ministry of Religious Affairs, the products of which go to charity) but the canals (35, 52) are subject to complicated regimes of sharing and responsibility. The village as a whole owns a canal or, really, the portion of the village that has fields on that canal own that section, and they negotiate the communal labor to mend the canals. Private fields depend on public water, in other words, but it is a shifting and specific public rather than a general thing. Therefore, you can only sell or transfer fields to somebody who can claim rights to the canal that waters them—effectively, another person from Tagharghist. A generation ago, somebody sold a few of the more distant fields to the next village down the river, and it has occasioned no end of irritation and conflict. Most of the fields owned by outsiders are simply farmed by people living in Tagharghist; the individuals involved arrange compensation, usually the farming of other fields in other villages.

There are two kinds of pastures, too. The nearer ones just above the village are exclusively used by the people of Tagharghist (60, 62, 64), while the high pastures of the Ouanoukrim, about a day's walk away, are shared by all the villages of the valley (59, 61, 63, 65). The high villages sometimes graze cattle at the Ouanoukrim (66), something impossible in the drier, lower elevations of Tagharghist. This is significant because cattle are one of the few sources of independent income for women. Enterprising women agree to feed and care for a cow, and they divide the profit from any calves with the owner of the cow (often a wealthier man from outside the village). Women from Tagharghist must take fodder to the cows (50, 67), while women from higher villages, with better-watered pastures, can let the cows graze on their own (66). It is much easier to let a cow eat grass than it is to cut grass for her (67) or grow maize for her to eat (50), and so this is one way in which the women of Tagharghist have a harder life than some in other villages.

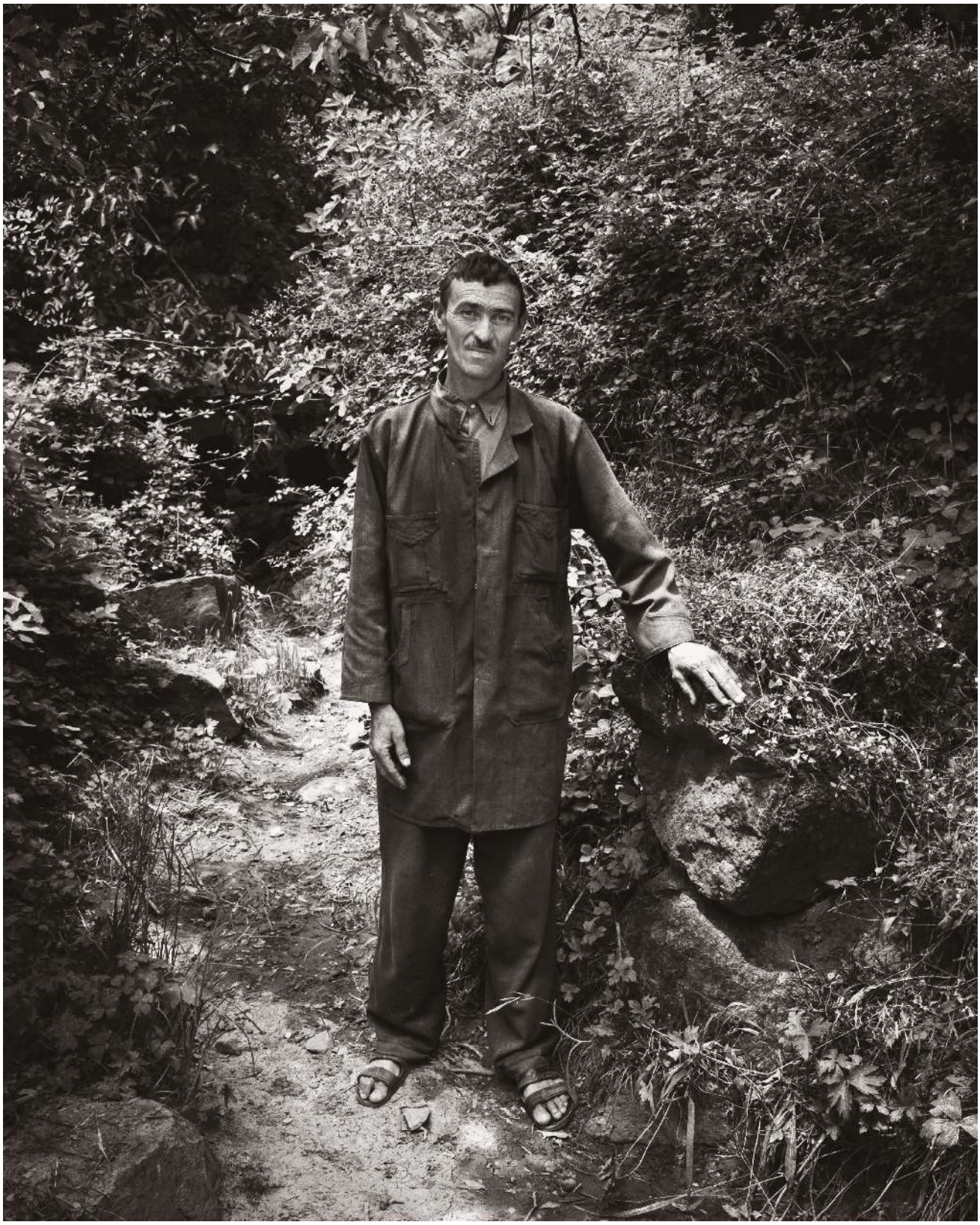


36 shrine of the local *marabout*
Sidi Haj Birkia, spring 2013

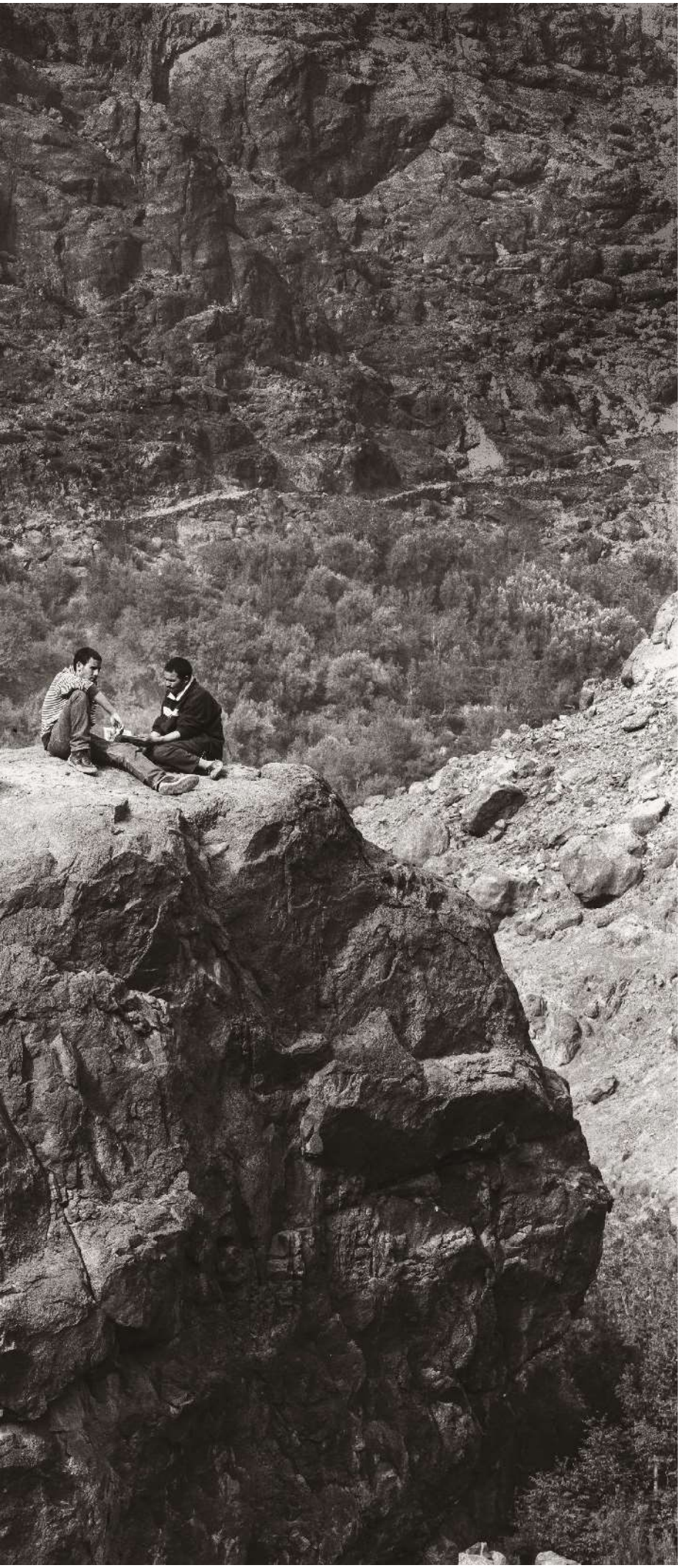


37 Hussein Idzdo, spring 2009

39 Hussein Arbuz, spring 2009

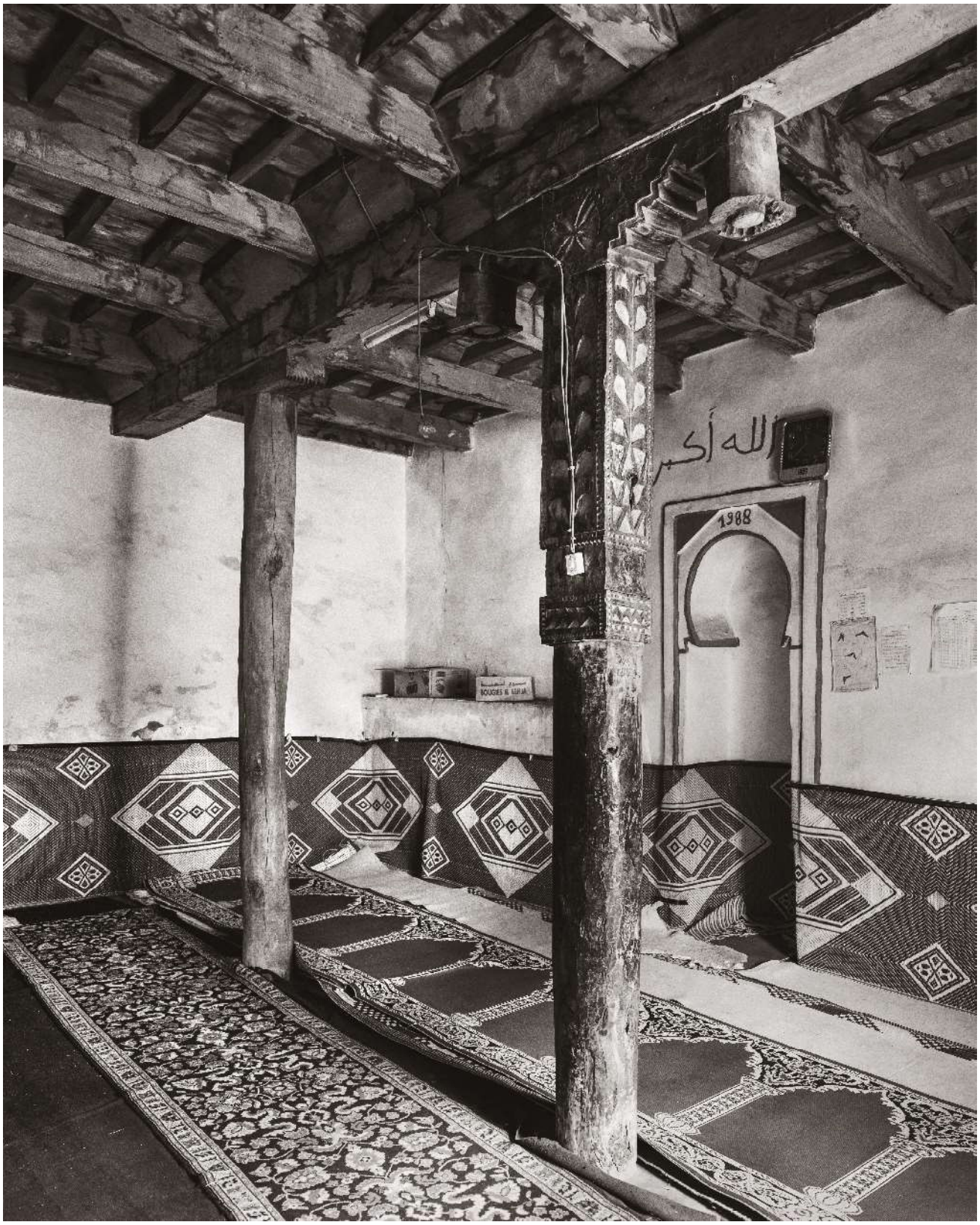


41 the Agoundis Valley, summer 2009

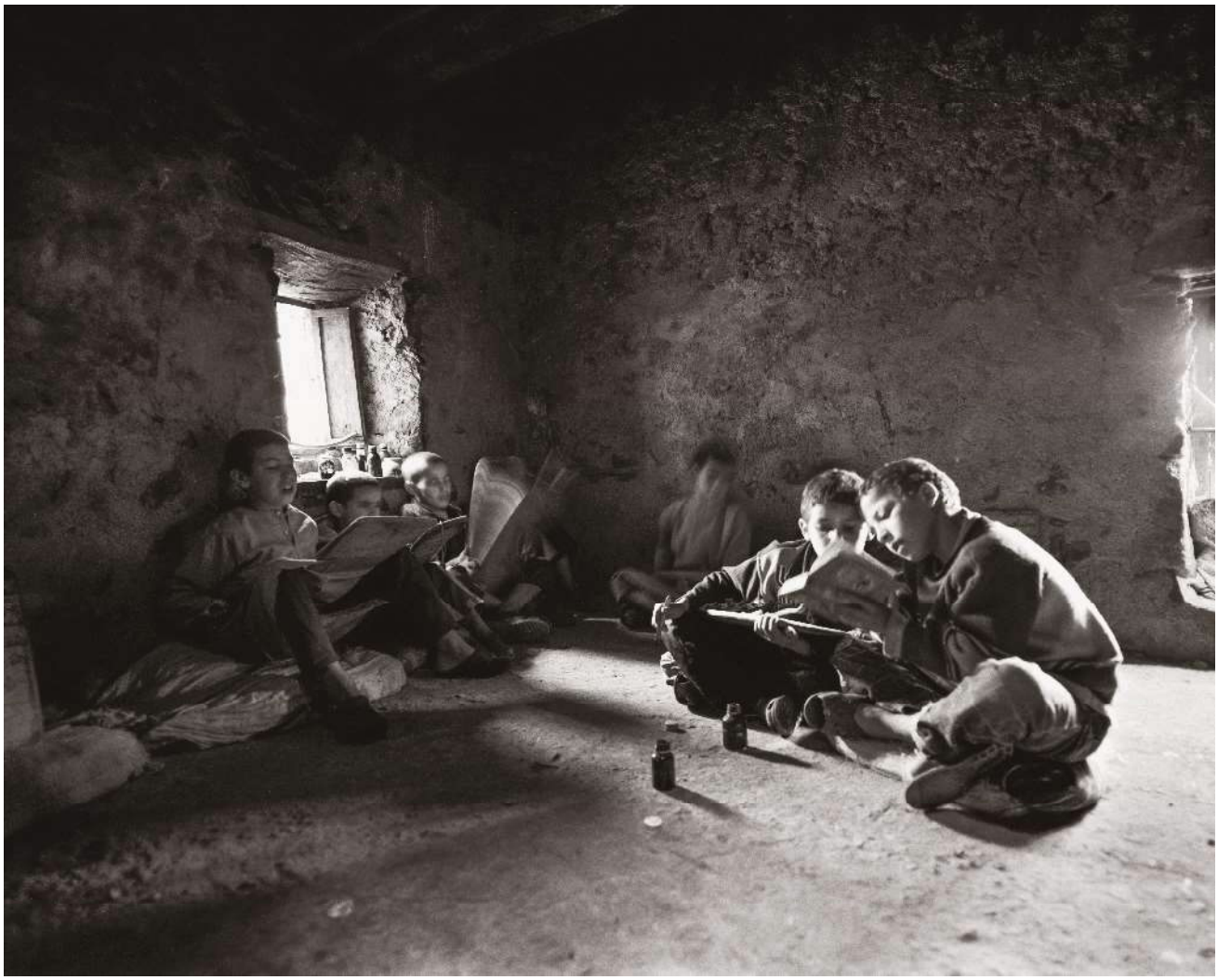


42 former mosque of Agerzra, now used as a shrine, autumn 2008

43 Hicham Belaid and Ali Idzdo in the classroom, spring 2013
44 mosque, autumn 2008


الله أكبر
1988
BOUGIES EL GURJA

45 *madrasa*, or Quranic school, autumn 2008



46 boys studying at the *madrasa*, or Quranic school, spring 2009

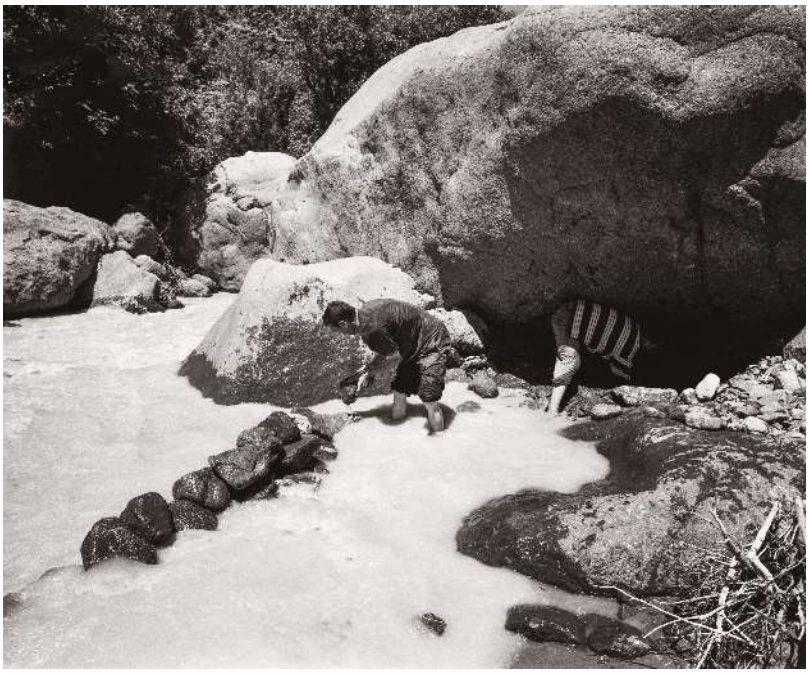
47 women hauling maize, autumn 2008

ELEMENTAL LABOR

The village of Tagharghist is a kind of living machine, one built slowly from the labor of untold generations. The cumulative infrastructure—the houses, canals, shepherds' huts, and terraced fields—represents a vast monument to human determination, one as impressive to me as any pyramid or temple. The photographs in this book reveal something of this achievement. With a little imagination you can feel the weight of the stone and timbers (13); you can sense how many people must have worked to hoist and ram this earth into its vertical position. Even a mishap, as when a boulder falls (10), offers a glimpse into how many other boulders had to be moved, how many tons of rock and dirt have been sculpted into walls and fields and paths one patient shovelful at a time.

The solidity of the village is carefully regenerated. Terraced fields (34) do not stay terraced from year to year. Rain and snow drag at the walls, pulling them down. Men continually and incrementally work to push rock back up, stacking it artfully back into place so that it holds the terraces. The soil, too, does not lie passively in its terrace. It must be revivified: plowed, fertilized, planted, weeded, watered, and divided into sections (54) that will hold the irrigation water. Each section needs to drink, and must be opened with a "key" cut into its walls, and then shut again when the soil has drunk its fill of the precious and carefully husbanded water.

Getting the right amount of water to the fields is an art. When the Agoundis is swollen from thundershowers or snowmelt (51, 56), great care must be taken to ensure that the torrent does not burst through the canals and wash away the terraces. In the dry summer months massive dams must be constructed to capture the dwindling trickle (48). Water is collected behind the dams, then sent in pulses through the canals (35, 52). In the older canals, constructed purely of mud and rock (photo 35 for instance), much of the irrigation water leaches out of the canals before it reaches the fields. While inefficient for the owners of fields, this has the advantage of watering interstitial spaces and giving life to all sorts of weeds and shrubs that are collected by the women for the cows (as in photo 35 or the background to 67). This is such an important feature of the older



48 men building a dam, spring 2009

canals that even when they began to be replaced with cement (52) small slices were cut out—in effect, purposely making the watertight canals leak. Still today, then, water needs to be sent in discrete pulses so that it does not trickle out on the way to its distant destination. In this sense the dams function less like a standard reservoir than a beating heart. From the dams the water is stored, then sent forth gently in a pulse, day and night, in a slow rhythm that nourishes the fields, the body of the village.

While men sometimes seem to be working alone in these fields (53, 55), the arrival of water in one place means that others are at work on the canal too, opening the "mouth" of the canal beyond the frame of the photo, sometimes nearly an hour's walk away. Since fields are strung out along a long ribbon of canal, and the four main canal systems involve many sub-systems that have to be coordinated, the overall exodus of water out of the river has to be controlled, at least in the dry season. The movement of water through canals and sub-canals, and then into the carefully built sections of the fields, is only accomplished through a symphonic coordination of rock, mud, men, and water all moving in time. A photo may show a young man in a field irrigating (53). It cannot show the many others working invisibly with him in coordinated precision to make that water flow.

While the men are primarily charged with growing the barley, the women cut (68), haul (70), and stack it for drying (71). Since each household's fields are sprinkled around the whole of the village land, women have to carry barley from near and far. Sometimes they bring it up from fields more than two kilometers away; others, bring it down from fields hundreds of vertical meters above the village. To do this they travel along trails so steep that they must be constructed on the cliff sides like staircases, and these must be continually reconstructed when heavy rain or snow washes them away. Once brought to the *inraren*, or threshing areas, the barley will be threshed, winnowed, and the grain stored in sacks (72). Periodically during the year, these sacks are brought down to the diesel-powered grain mill next to the shrine to be ground into flour.

In addition to the work of hauling timber for building (74), and chopping (57) and carrying (58) firewood, there is the constant, all-important task of raising babies (25, 31), nurturing the next generation. In Tagharghist, babies are cherished. They represent what villagers take to be the self-evident goal of existence, but babies are also a crucial form of social security. The old depend on the young (14, 32) and at a tender age the young, and girls in particular, become the hard workers that support the old and keep the village alive. I have written elsewhere on the conundrum of child labor, work integral to village life but largely unacceptable in most urban areas, at least to most urban sensibilities (Crawford 2010b). I have also written about the power of babies to transform adults, and about the differences between parenting in middle-class contexts and in a village (Crawford 2013). What I have never been able to express is the indomitable spirit I see in the children of Tagharghist, especially the girls,

the humor and joy with which they confront their difficult lives. It seems you need a photograph to capture the radiance of these hard-working young people (21, 22, 24, 29).

For families with limited fields, or extraneous male labor, shepherding is another way to augment the household budget. The local pastures just above the village (60, 62, 64) are exclusively available to the people of Tagharghist. The shepherds stay in their huts (a hut is called an *azib*; they are visible in 60, and 64), but meals are often cooked in the village and taken to the shepherds by the young women of their households. For girls, this can be an arduous climb up to the pastures, but it also represents an opportunity to escape the confines of village propriety. In the evenings when they are taking meals up to the pastures, and especially after dark when they are returning to the village, girls are beyond the immediate control of the patriarchs. Sometimes you can hear them skipping merrily, confidently down the trails in the dark, with all of the excitement and peril that represents.

The more distant pastures of the Ouanoukrim Massif are a very different situation (59, 61, 63, 65, 66). At 3,000 to 4,000 meters above sea level, these are cold, windy and inhospitable. The warmth of the village is far away; shepherds work alone in ten-day rotations, and no girls bring them dinner. Firewood is rare, usually no more than uprooted bushes (63), and huts are only big enough for one man to lie down and sleep. (A few are barely visible in photo 61.) These huts are chthonic, claustrophobic burrows, and whenever I visited the pastures I preferred to sleep outside with the snarling dogs. Each night the herds are brought into a collective corral, where the dogs can guard them, and each morning the shepherds separate out their flocks animal by animal and head off in their own direction to search for pasture. Kids are walled up in small rock cupboards by day—the Ouanoukrim is too cold for young goats—or else they are carried by the shepherds (63). Kids are allowed to suckle from their mothers at night.

Anyone who thinks of shepherding as "unskilled labor" has never tried to do it. Shepherds must understand the pastures, what is growing in them at what times, and what their animals need. Shepherds have to pay careful attention to rapidly changing weather and be on guard for predators and thieves. It is cold, difficult, and lonely work. Only men who have trained as boys can take responsibility for a flock of goats in the high country. A mistake can decimate a herd and bankrupt a family in a single bad storm, especially because it is poor families who lack agricultural land who turn to herding to survive. These days, wealthy outsiders have taken to trucking animals to the high country in the summer and paying shepherds a wage to care for them. While this creates some work for some locals, it also puts tremendous pressure on the pastures, and creates a dilemma for the Waters and Forests Department of the national government. Conservationists want to restrict grazing in the Ouanoukrim pastures to protect them, but doing so imperils some of the poorest families living in these mountains.

Since 1995, when I first visited Tagharghist, striking changes have occurred. Perhaps the biggest impact has been the dirt road (2, 6, 36, 47), which arrived around 1997. In some sections, it literally had to be blasted out of the cliff walls with dynamite, as in the flat spot shown in photo 33. Before that, anybody trying to get to the upper valley had to walk or ride a mule, and the trail was not always easy to follow. When the road was built, trucks could get into the valley, making travel much easier and allowing for changes in agriculture. People could grow fruit, for instance, because they could get it to market. More of the land came to be planted in crops for sale and less for local use. Trucks transformed village life, changing the basic economic calculus and also changing the experience of living in the valley.

The road led to a spike in migration. Traditionally, families with excess labor, for example families with five girls and no boys, would send some of their girls to live with relatives who needed girls to help around the house. At the same time, they would

host boys from other branches of their family who had more boys than they could put to work. As households changed over time, boys and girls could be moved through family networks wherever their labor was needed, weaving villages and valleys into a broad social order. The road changed that. With travel becoming easier, families began to send their children to work in the cities—girls as domestic servants and boys in dairies, bakeries, restaurants, or in construction. This meant that much-needed cash was repatriated to the village, but it also weakened the bonds among extended families. Households became more individualized, inward-looking, and self-reliant. By 2009, when cell-phone coverage reached the village, keeping track of migrant children—and ensuring their wages returned home—became even easier. Immediate family ties between migrants and the village were strengthened, since people could better communicate, but the broader social fabric began to fray as extended families no longer exchanged labor over the long term. Relationships became more short-term, with some of the children sent to the city abandoning their mountain households to strike out on their own instead of patiently waiting to inherit the land of their parents.

The installation of a drinking-water system illustrates a similar dynamic. With funding from the U.S. Peace Corps, the villagers capped a spring high in the mountains (it is in a small valley in the background of photo 60) and then ran a pipe hundreds of vertical meters down to the village to a reservoir (it is at the extreme upper left of photo 6). From there smaller pipes hacked into the rock brought the water to a set of eight public taps (73). There were intense negotiations about where the taps would be located. The Peace Corps volunteer mediated the debate, but insisted that the taps be public. He was anxious that the water be equitably distributed, and making the taps public would ensure that the limited drinkable water was not wasted on bathing or washing clothes during the dry season, when it was scarce.

Soon after the Peace Corps volunteer left Tagharghist, the villagers bought plastic pipe, capped most of the public taps, and ran water directly into their houses. Predictably, this caused many problems. The cheap pipe could not be set deep enough into the rocky earth to protect it, so it frequently broke and leaked. Water was left on in private houses, or during shortages people would still use the drinkable water for things other than drinking, like laundry or bathing children. The problem has not entirely been solved. As the village moves from a carefully negotiated collective existence to a hastily built more private one, communal responsibilities must be renegotiated. This is not easy, and necessarily takes time. The social good—or even the socially tolerable—does not spring automatically from individual interests.

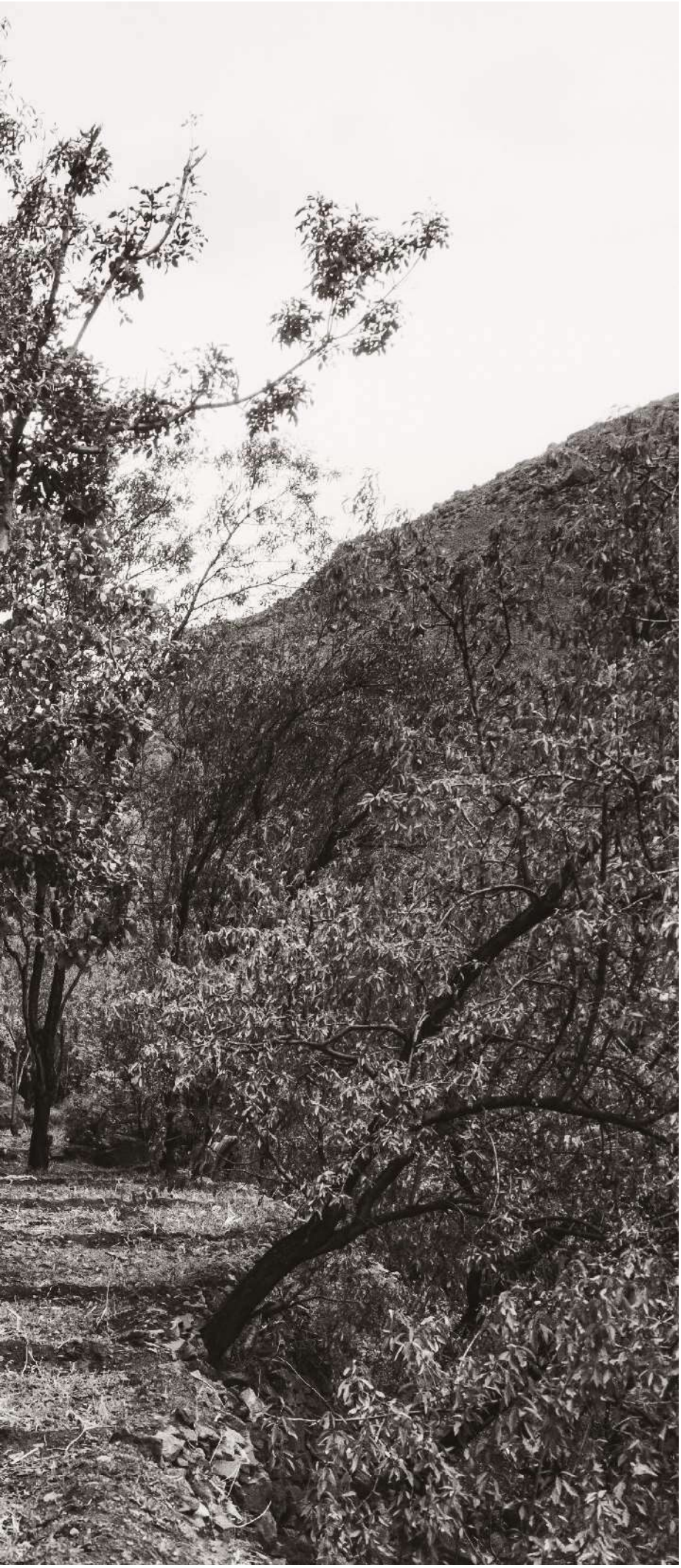
By 2013, government electricity arrived in the village (18, 19, 30), and the poles now dot the landscape. These came with small meters, so that every family pays its own bill. While some people had satellite dishes and television using solar power, the government electricity makes it far easier; it has become a social norm, a "need" instead of a "want." With the new system you do not have to maintain and replace batteries and solar placards, but you do need cash so that you can pay your bill. Village homes are now literally tethered to the national grid. The impacts of such transformations stand to carry with them unintended consequences. The most immediately obvious is that in previous times people wanted cash. Now, with electricity, they need it.

Still, it is a mistake to imagine that the village lacked technology in the era before the road and electricity. An *anrar*, for instance, is a complex tool. A threshing area is built strong enough to withstand the weight of a team of mules stomping on it day in and day out. Since the storeroom is below, this "roof" of nothing but mud and timbers is crucial. If it collapsed, mules and people could be killed. It is not at all simple to build a roof this sturdy with nothing but logs and mud, and so an *anrar* ought to be considered vastly impressive technology even if it looks like a pile of rocks with a pole sticking out. Even the pole has to be engineered to withstand the force of six powerful animals pulling on it sideways. What looks like a simple stick popping out of the ground is in fact a complicatedly reinforced device that, in the time I lived in Tagharghist, never failed in its duty.

49 the olive press, spring 2013

The old olive press is even more astonishing. The wheel for crushing the olives is evident in photo 49, but what you cannot see is the actual press in the building next door. Once the olives are crushed (by a man or a donkey pushing the stone around on top of them) the olive mash is put into large, fibrous, hand-woven bags. (The weaving of these bags is itself an achievement.) These are taken inside the building and set on a stone. Above the stone a massive walnut tree has been felled, and fited with a huge boulder on a cable to make it even heavier. Through the center of the trunk runs a kind of giant wooden corkscrew. Twisted one way, it raises the entire walnut trunk, and the boulder hanging from it, up in the air. The bags of olive mash are set underneath it, and the corkscrew turned the other way to let the tremendous weight of the tree and boulder down on top of the bags. The olive oil is squeezed from the bags under intense pressure and trickles out in small rivulets to collect in a basin in the floor. It is then scooped up and kept in bottles for use.

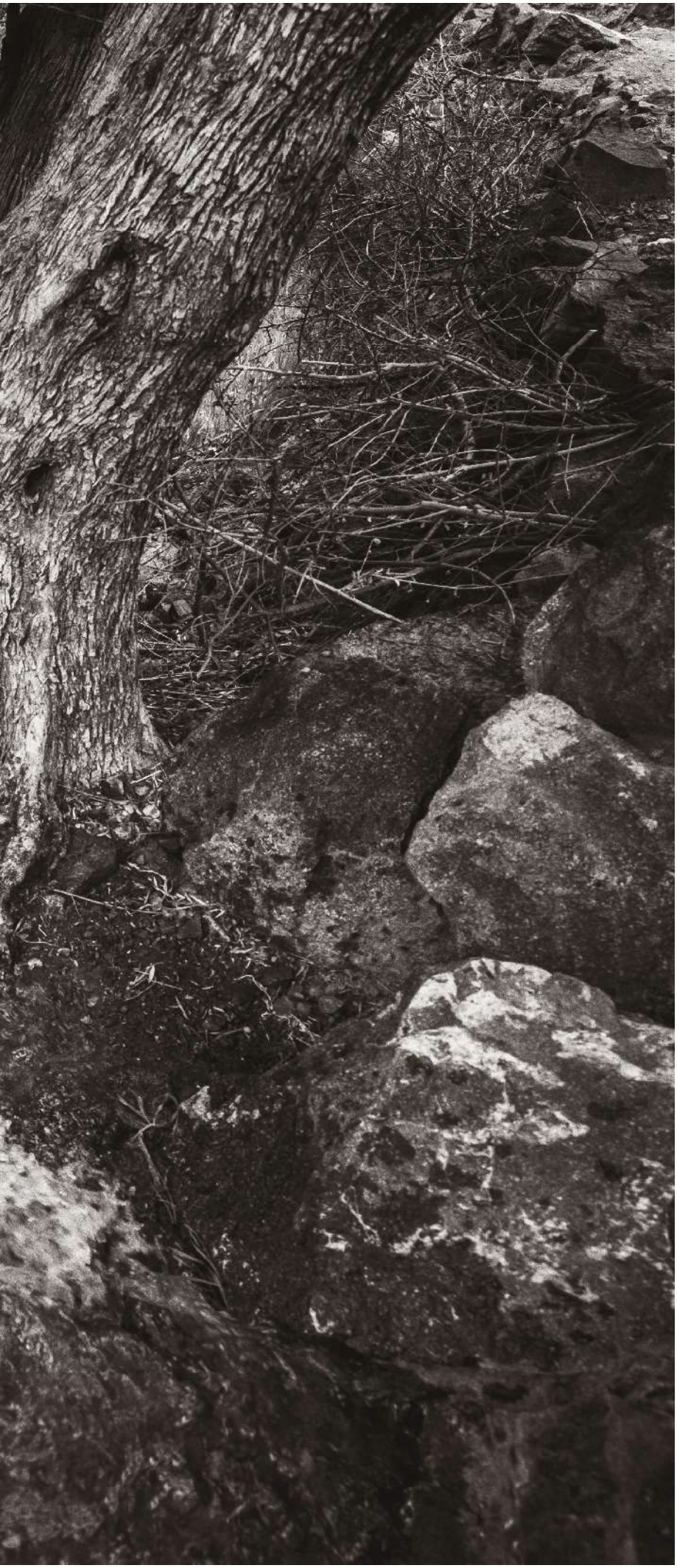
Today the press is rarely used. It is simpler to sell the olives to people down the mountain who run them through a diesel-powered press. With the trucks, it is as easy to get the olives out of the mountains as it is to export the labor of children. Precious things leaving means cash coming back up the hill; with money, many useful things may be had, though often with hidden costs that cannot be easily calculated.



50 women hauling maize, autumn 2008

51 Brahim Ait Ben Ouchen, autumn 2008

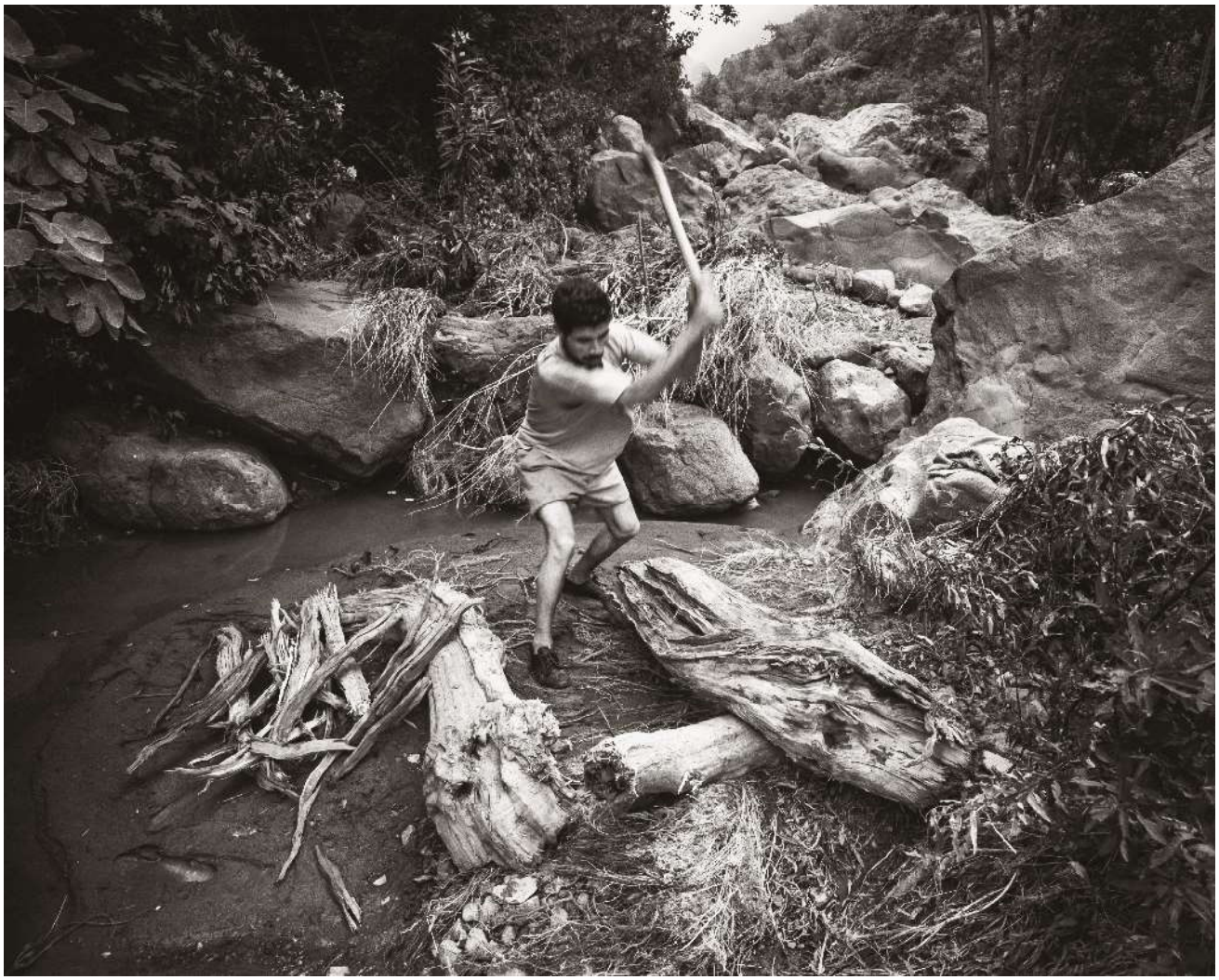
52 a cement *targa*, or irrigation canal, autumn 2008



54 a field at Agouni n'ait Anou, spring 2009

55 Mohammed Ait Ben Ouchen inspecting his crops, spring 2009

56 Brahim Id Baj collecting wood after a flood, spring 2009



59 goats at the Ouanoukrim Massif,
summer 2009

60 an *azib*, or shepherd's hut, at the local pastures of Agouni n'ait Anou, spring 2013

61 the peaks of the Ouanoukrim, summer 2009

62 goats and a few sheep at the local pastures, autumn 2008
63 Lahcen Hadoush at the Ouanoukrim Massif, summer 2009

64 a complex of shepherds' huts at the local pastures of Agouni n'ait Anou, autumn 2009

65 Hamed Bil Lahcen and Mohamed Ait Yous at the Ouanoukrim Massif, summer 2009

66 the Ouanoukrim Massif, summer 2009
67 Zahra Ait Ben Ouchen, autumn 2008

68 Fatime Ait Bayborik, spring 2009

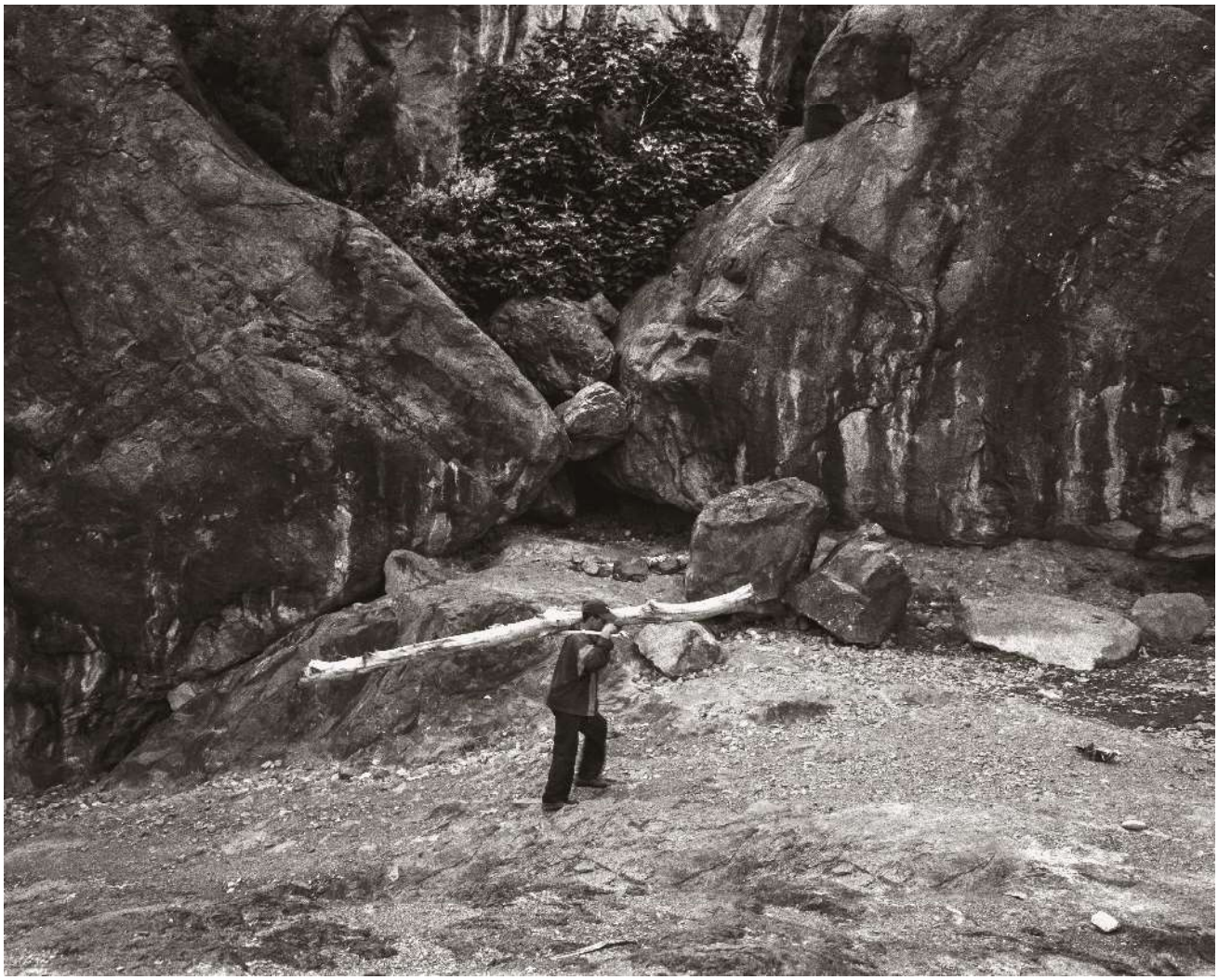
69 Fatime Ait Bayborik and her husband Mohammed Ait Ben Ouchen, spring 2009

70 Aisha Ait Ben Ouchen, spring 2009

71 stacking barley to dry at the *anrar*, or threshing area, spring 2009

72 carrying barley to the store room, spring 2013

73 Rqia Ait Mohammed, spring 2009



74 carrying lumber for construction, spring 2009

75 Mohammed Arbuz, autumn 2008

CONCLUSION

Tagharghist is changing. The transformation is visible in electricity poles and cement canals, the new road and the diesel grain mill; but there is much more to it, a deeper, epochal shift. It is not just contact with the wider economy. There have always been influences from beyond the valley, from the arrival of Islam and the local passion for Chinese tea, to protectorate-era *corvée* labor and the first asphalt road over the mountains in the 1930s. However important such connections have been, it is impossible to ignore the swelling incursion of the global economy now, and the consequent transformation of the way the village works. Things are changing—fast.

Indicatively, the villagers stopped using their ancient shrine during the time it took us to make this book. They used to worship their *marabout* communally on the 14th day of Ramadan in a ceremony known as a *maarouf* (Mahdi 1999, Rachik 1992). They would sacrifice five animals—symbolic of the five lineages of the village and the five pillars of Islam—and then repartition the meat equally among the village households. The equality was important. Five integral but unequal animals were rendered into dozens of scrupulously identical pyramids of meat spread out for all to see. It was a happy affair. Children roasted bits of the fresh livers over small fires (children do not fast during Ramadan), and after sunset everyone enjoyed a midnight mid-Ramadan feast. Lineages, represented by the goats, and fairness, as indicated by the piles, were the twin pillars of communal organization. The ritual rendered visible the village's core values through the graphic disarticulation of five unlucky goats.

This expression of village mores and social organization fascinated me when I lived in Tagharghist in 1999, though in the last few years the process has come to be considered quaint by the villagers, even embarrassing. It is misaligned with the new social order, and irreconcilable with the dominant currents of Islamic practice. Migrants return with new understandings of how to worship, of the "correct" Islam. Households fend for themselves by selling labor, and they become less equal, less interdependent, less dependent on the lineage structures of organization. The ritual loses its force and purpose. The *maarouf* at the shrine has now been abandoned. Villagers practice Ramadan in the style of their urban relatives. The former shrine is just a building crumbling beside the road (36, 42).

This illuminates something fundamental: a shift in the basic processes of social reproduction. Part of what any society must do, part of what any economy must allow, is the reproduction of the physical bodies that make up society, and the reconstitution of the social bonds that hold them together (Robertson 1991). When I first moved to Tagharghist in 1998 there were two key features to social reproduction: the way households organized labor (hierarchically via the obedience of the young to the old) and the way households were assembled for village-wide projects (via lineages with the aim of equality). There is a book's worth of detail about how this used to happen, but the point is simple: hierarchical households, unequally endowed, were consolidated into an egalitarian village. This is what the ritual signified: five goats for five lineages with the differences in size and quality of the animals negated via the equalization of the piles of meat for each household.

The intensified use of wage labor is a solvent eating away at the social logic of village life. Families are now selling their children's labor to urban bosses rather than sharing it among rural kin. Households are no longer made equal by the transfer of children. And children are coming to see their labor as something they own, something to sell, rather than something they owe to their elders, their lineages, or God. Now, as we go to print, a new cobalt mine is under construction just a few villages away from Tagharghist. This will increase the possibilities for wage labor, and the tension between the needs of the old (for care and sustenance via the labor of the young) and those who are relatively young (who want cash to start their own families, make their own way, and escape the dominance of the elders). It will also change the gendered division of labor: as men leave for paid work, the women are left to maintain the village, and to act as the self-conscious guardians of tradition (Hoffman 2008).

It is a new world that village children face. As they move to the city, or the mine, as they make their own money, their removal from the village breaks the intergenerational chain of being, neuters the power of the landowning elders, and prevents families from fulfilling their obligation to share with distant kin. No longer do children move from one household to another, matching physical abilities to social needs. When each person comes to calculate as an individual, and each family is separate, then the village *as a village* is dead. There may remain the shell—the soil, fields, houses and other structures—but the communal organism that brought the rock to life cannot survive as an association of the self-interested. No sane capitalist installs a barley farm on the side of a mountain, and for good reason. Something may be farmed here in the future—probably the land will be turned to arboriculture, and the pastures to eco-tourism—but this swatch of earth will not be farmed *as a village*. The social unit will be gone even as the standing buildings belie its absence. This book is, among other things, a testament to something doomed.

But what exactly are we losing, and should we care? Social organization will continue to change, surely, but we do not know if this will be a blessing, a step into a better future, or a tragic loss to mourn. Even less clear is the fate of that ineffable thing we call "culture." What happens to Berber culture as Berber villages cease to exist? Are the values, beliefs, and sentiments of villagers necessarily tethered to their social and economic practice? Can culture float free, *sui generis*, with its own dynamics, its own politics? Across Morocco and in every country where Berbers make their lives they take something of their *tamazirt* with them; they remain, in so many cases, thoroughly Amazigh. Migrants build a sense of themselves in their new worlds by drawing from the materials of their past, and these pasts are re-imagined as a new collective project. We find Amazigh cultural associations in towns large and small, in cities, on the Internet, even established at the national level in Morocco at the *Institute Royal de la Culture Amazighe*. In France and Algeria there is a long history of a specifically Berber rights movement (Chaker 1989, Maddy-Weitzman 2011), and villagers in North Africa continue to contribute to it in fascinating ways (Goodman 2005, Silverstein 2013). Cultural production does not seem to be simply determined by material production, so it is not clear what exactly will be lost through economic transformation.

This international efflorescence of Amazigh consciousness illustrates an old but important point: culture is always changing, always borrowed and reconstructed anew in the context in which people find themselves. Even the iconic tea of Moroccan hospitality, and the passionate, seemingly primordial loyalty to Islam of mountain villagers—these are historical phenomena, elements introduced to the mountains, and not that many centuries ago. Such foundational features of Moroccan culture seem eternal and immutable, but they are not. All cultures are like this; we borrow not just from our own ancestors but from everyone we encounter. All cultures exist in the grand swirl of world history, taking what they want and need from wherever it may be found. Not long after we borrow, we forget. The foreign becomes domesticated, incorporated, and we soon see it as ours. We cannot imagine ourselves any other way. Berbers without tea? Without Islam? To the villagers in this book such a world is inconceivable—as inconceivable as modern France without Arabic numerals or Italian food before tomatoes.

Over time, with the threat of losing what has become part of us, our past is colored with nostalgia. This nostalgia, this pain or despair for an intangible loss, is an intimation that there is something we yearn to recapture, something we value but cannot always articulate. Nostalgia happens in our present, and it is about our future. It is a call from our heart (or our liver, as villagers say) to attend to something we might lose, something our gut tells us we ought to cherish and preserve, and bring with us on our inexorable march into the unknown. Can this be all bad? "Nostalgia" as a term feels disreputable, maudlin, but perhaps this is the prejudice of intellectuals. Nostalgia may be bittersweet, but it suggests something sensuous, something to savor. Nearly fifty years ago Jacques Berque wrote that Berbers provide "one of the Maghreb's most hopeful features, its communal solidarity" (1967:218). What could be more useful to our future than that? There may be a lesson in the immanent feeling of loss in these photos. Some things may be worth saving, and nostalgia may lure us towards them.

76 a truck passing Tagharghist, autumn 2008

EPILOGUE: A TRUCK I NO LONGER LOVE

I once loved this truck. Locally called *hadeed*, Arabic for "iron," or *bujo*, Berber for "Peugeot," it used to come only as far as the village of Maghzen. This was several steep kilometers below Tagharghist, and the only way into the upper valley then was on foot or by mule. Trucks even to that point were rare and not very predictable, and if you were walking out of the valley and one came along it represented a gust of good fortune. A truck meant hours of dusty walking shrunk down to a short happy ride.

Then the road was extended to Tijrisht, then Ighir. During this phase the road covered the first ten or twelve kilometers up from the junction with the asphalt road and made getting up to Tagharghist much less exhausting than doing the trip entirely on foot. This was especially true if you were carrying supplies. In those days the "iron" only came up the valley on souk day, so its appearance signaled the chance to go to market, a time when men could gather from near and far to trade goods, information, and gossip. Old friends could meet up, deals were made, and meals would feature fresh vegetables out of season (because they were hauled up from the plains) and meat. The rarity of the truck made it exciting. Six days a week the road was quiet and mostly empty, with only the occasional man passing on his way to run an errand, or groups of women heading up or down to see relatives in other villages, or visiting a shrine. Then from pre-dawn until long after dark on souk day the truck bounced up and down the narrow *piste*, guttering and grinding gears, billowing great clouds of dust and diesel fumes, and hauling loads of singing, shouting, boisterous men into and out of the mountains. (The few women who rode in the truck were admitted to the cab; men piled together into the bed.) On market days near Ramadan or the 'eid al Kebir the *bujo* would return with migrants, who were especially festive. Wearing their clean city clothes, bearing gifts, and bursting with salutations for friends and family in each village strung along the road, the truck hauled loads of warm humanity aching for the home they had left behind.

Eventually the road was extended to Tagharghist and then further, all the way up past Ait Moussa to Ait Youb, at the uppermost limits of human habitation. More trucks came. By 2009, there were trucks every day, several of them most days,

and far more people moved far more frequently. New protocols emerged. Often two trucks would travel together. They would roll into the village before first light as men hollered to one another in the darkness to assess which of their friends were in which truck. Fathers and sons would attempt to separate, so that each could share in the outré humor everyone desired on the ride. It made for a complicated social algebra. A son would choose the second truck because he saw his father aim for the first one, but there he would encounter his oldest paternal uncle—whom his father was avoiding—and the son's fun was ruined. Nobody would make off-color jokes in a truck with a paternal uncle, especially a father's older brother. However, if the stars aligned in the cold morning and the generations managed to separate themselves, the bumpy ride down could become a kind of competition in humor: who could make the most people laugh the hardest without anyone dampening the fun with an accusation of *hashuma*, shame.

Trees complicated the joking. Walnuts, almonds, carob, and olive trees hung low over the road in places. The rhythm of the stories and jokes was adjusted to accommodate the passing branches. Everyone had to duck or risk decapitation, sometimes on this side of the truck, sometimes on the other. Sometimes ducking too quickly meant bumping heads with your neighbor. And ducking is not so easy while balancing on a foundation of barley sacks, suitcases, gas canisters, sacks of walnuts, condemned sheep, or even a beehive wrapped in burlap. Of course bumping heads was hilarious in itself, so long as nobody was seriously hurt, and anyone making you laugh so hard that you got whacked by a passing branch necessarily felt a sense of accomplishment.

However, as more trucks arrived the ride became rudimentary. Boys chased after it less frequently, people developed an allegiance to this driver or that, and many would wait for a more comfortable ride rather than packing in tightly together. The drivers became more used to the road. Dangerous spots were augmented by cement, so the trip was safer, and once it was safer the trucks moved faster, were less likely to stop for communal deliberations about the best line through tight steep curves or which rock along the edges was likely to crumble. The road was regularized, professionalized, sapped of adventure, tamed; it was rarely quiet.

It became impossible to walk to souk even if you wanted to. A series of trucks would overtake you one after another and each carried men who knew you, who would urge you to get in, to ride like a normal person. Only people too poor to afford the five *dirham* tariff would walk, and I was obviously not one of these. You saw fewer mules on the road, too. They had a hard time using the roads now filled with trucks. The men who lived in side canyons would tether their animals at the confluence of their river and ours and transfer their loads and themselves to the trucks. Gone were the days when we would sit in the open-air balconies of the houses and ogle the passing mules on market day. It was no longer possible to see who was traveling with whom, or to ask men in for tea and pump them for news and gossip. Gone was the one old woman halfway down the valley who sold *askeef*, a kind of barley-based gruel, to travelers. Everyone now rumbles past in a noisy cloud of dust: no way to stop a whole truck just for soup, and no need for sustenance to finish the long walk.

Trucks were part of the transformation of the valley. Men started planting apple trees and other fruit that could be packed and transported down to market for sale. Crops flowed out of the valley and small amounts of money gurgled back up. The new fruit orchards need less physical labor, and they only need it at certain times of the year. With their labor required only periodically, more children are sent to the city to work. These workers can be tracked more easily with new cell phones, visited more often using the trucks, and their wages more easily repatriated to the village patriarchs (at least until the children abandon them). The tight social world of Tagharghist is being dissolved by these rolling iron catalysts, the trucks. Social connections link

people out of the valley via the road rather than up river beds and goat paths via kin and friendship networks; the social world now flows along the black asphalt veins to the cities of the plain. I can see the good the trucks do, and I can understand why villagers welcome them, why, in fact, villagers are coming to need them. But these are trucks I can no longer love.

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WITH THANKS

The People of Tagharghist

Abdurrahman Ait Ben Ouchen, Brahim Ait Ben Ouchen, Mohammed Ait Ben Ouchen, The American Institute of Maghrib Studies, Mustapha Bamouh, Dominique Barberis, Jamila Bargach, Ruth Ann Baumgartner, Mohammed Belaid, Gebhart Blazek, Aomar Boum, Léon Buskens, Anne Campbell, Calum Crawford, Dimitri Degruyter, Ada Deseyn, Anna Deseyn, Emiel Deseyn, Jean Dethier, Kevin Dwyer, Joeri El Hazimi, Gisela Gil-Egui, Ramon Guardans, Hillary Haldane, Lula Haldane, Brendan Hart, Kim Hopper, Fatima Id Baj, Eunkyung Ji, Jan Kath, Daniel Keller, Scott Lacy, Yelins A. Mahtat, Marike Mahtat-Minnema, Gary Martin, Jim Miller, Michelle Phillips, Sandy Robertson, Mohamed Saadouni, Elly Schimmel, Sebastian Schutyser, Emilio Spadola, Harry Stroomer, Marleen van Hoof, Nanja Veereman, Roger Veereman, Sven Versmissen

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